

1862

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THE  
SIXPENNY MAGAZINE

SEPTEMBER 1, 1862.

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## THE ROYAL NATIONAL LIFE-BOAT INSTITUTION.

It is a startling fact, that since the beginning of the present year there have been upwards of 1000 ships wrecked on our coasts: 99 of these wrecks took place during the month of March, and 30 during the last week of April. With such a heartrending announcement staring us in the face, the question that naturally arises is, "Could not something have been done to render assistance to the unfortunate beings placed in such danger?" And it is with the view of showing what is being and has been done in this good cause, that we have chosen the subject of Life-Boats for the present article.

In the first place, then, let us perfectly understand what means are being used. About eighty years ago there might have been some difficulty in answering this inquiry—*then* such things as life-boats were unknown; and it was not until the wreck of the *Adventure* at the mouth of the Tyne, in the sight of thousands of spectators, and actually within a stone's-throw of the mainland, that public attention was drawn to the necessity of providing help. Sir William Hillary, who during his residence in the Isle of Man became deeply interested in the cause of our gallant mariners, after considerable opposition succeeded, with the help of Mr. Thomas Wilson, M.P., in forming a society which has since proved the nucleus of that admirable society, the "Royal National Life-Boat Institution."

Still, though great and good men did their best to provide the much-required means, it was not until 1850 that the cause obtained any degree of stability. In that year his Grace the Duke of Northumberland, the President of the Institution, offered a prize of 100*l.* for the best model of a life-boat; and although the premium was awarded, there remained in the opinion of the examiners so much room for improvement, that Mr. James Peake, assistant master shipwright at the Woolwich Dockyard, together with Captain Washington, R.N., Hydrographer to the Admiralty, both men of great experience and judgment, were requested to design a new model which would combine the excellences of the best of those formally submitted to their inspection, and by careful study of their defects attain a much higher degree of

perfection than any hitherto known. To the result of their united talents, to which experience has added a few improvements, we owe the present model upon which the boats built under the direction of the institution are constructed.

The object of the Society for the Preservation of Life from Shipwreck is explained by its title, and the chief means used to carry out this laudable design are these:—To build, station, and maintain in repair, at such places upon the coast as wrecks are apt to occur, life-boats of the most perfect description; to furnish them with all the appurtenances, including houses to preserve them in, and carriages to convey them to the scene of the wreck. Also the appointment of local committees for the superintendence of boats, and the conferring of honorary rewards in the form of medals and votes of thanks, as well as pecuniary remuneration, to those who risk their own lives in the endeavour to save those of others.

This Institution, of which Her Gracious Majesty is patroness, is the only national one, and was incorporated by Royal Charter in 1860. The institution has a perpetual president, vice-presidents, treasurer, secretary, and inspector; also a committee of management, to be elected every year, which shall in turn consist of a chairman and vice-chairman, together with elected governors, numbering not over forty, or less than fifteen. A general meeting is held annually, but a special meeting can be called at any time for the transaction of unexpected or extraordinary business.

Each life-boat station is placed under the superintendence of the local board, which consists of at least five ordinary residents, one of whom must be a sailor or otherwise experienced person. In case of there being a coast-guard station at or near the life-boat station, the inspecting officer has often charge of the boat, which is in such cases usually manned by the coast-guardsmen. The crew consists of a coxswain superintendent, a second coxswain, a bowman, and as many boatmen as the boat pulls oars; though in all cases a double number must be enrolled, not necessarily for regular duty, but that they may possess some knowledge as to the management of the boat in case of the absence of the proper crew, which, as in



the fatal disaster at Scarborough in November, when the crew consisted of volunteers, may frequently happen.

The coxswain, subject to the orders of the local committee, has the entire direction of the crew, and is held responsible for the good order and repair of the boat, together with everything connected with it. He must see that all is ready for service, all sand or gravel removed from the door of the boat-house, with ways ready to lay in case they may be required, the wheels of the carriage greased, a beaker of fresh water filled, a lamp trimmed, hand-rockets, life-belts, and all other gear prepared for a moment's warning; and when this warning comes, it is his duty to assemble the crew, or, if any or all be absent, a picked volunteer crew. If the wreck be at a distance, to procure a sufficient number of horses (which, by the Wreck and Salvage Act, any magistrate, constable, or revenue-officer may demand the use of) to convey the carriage and boat to that part of the coast nearest the wreck where she may be effectually launched. Upon the coxswain devolves the sole command of the crew; he must use his own judgment in his dangerous and arduous duty. Preservation of life being his sole consideration, on this account he is not to allow any goods whatsoever to be taken on board the life-boat. All services performed by the boat are entered in a journal, a copy of which is forwarded to the secretary of the institution in London after each wreck.

The wages given to the coxswain are eight pounds per annum, and on each occasion of going afloat to save life he receives, equally with each of the crew, ten shillings for day and one pound for night service; and as the efficiency of the boats greatly depends upon the good training and discipline of the crew, together with a thorough knowledge of and dependence in the powers of their boat, it is ordered by the institution that they must exercise every quarter, choosing stormy weather occasionally: for this they each receive three shillings in fine and five in rough weather.

There are necessarily very strict rules regarding the pecuniary rewards given or offered to the crew. In any case where salvage for property is paid to the life-boat, the local committee have power to retain a portion equal to two shares, to be applied to the repair and maintenance of the boat, the remainder being divided equally between the coxswain and crew.

If, on the other hand, salvage for life be paid, no portion whatever is to be reserved for the use of the boats, but given solely to the crew.

The quarterly reports and responsibility as to the repairs of the boat lie under the department of the local committee, who are requested by the Parent Institution to offer any suggestion conducive to the efficacy of their boat.

Having thus laid before our readers the plan and objects of the Royal National Life-Boat Institution, we shall endeavour to point out a few plain facts in confirmation of its necessity and utility.

As an insular and maritime country, one whose proudest boast has been in her wooden walls, and whose great wealth consists in those colonial and distant possessions upon which "the sun never sets," it stands to reason that a very large proportion of our fellow-subjects must seek their living upon the face of the deep.

According to the returns lately published by the Board of Trade, we find that 26,029 British ships, and 20,744 foreign ditto, passed in or out of the ports of the United Kingdom in the year 1860. Of these the average number wrecked is 1184, with a loss of life on our own coasts alone averaging 800; and, looking back at the *Wreck Register* for some years, we find that since the year 1824, the total loss of life has reached the astounding amount of 11,856. The year 1860 being unusually stormy, the number of shipwrecks reached the number of 1379, being far above the ordinary average for the past six years; yet in spite of this it is comforting to find that, although the actual wrecks were so numerous, the loss of life did not reach the average for the last nine years by 264 souls, the total loss from the 1379 wrecks being 536. The number of lives saved stands thus:—

By life-boats .....	326
Rocket and mortar apparatus	408
Ships, shore and other boats,	
steamers, &c.....	2949
By individual gallantry.....	14
	<hr/>
	3697

Those saved by life-boats have all been under perilous circumstances, when, in all human probability, they would otherwise have perished.

The *Register* mentions some interesting



facts relative to the class of ships which suffer most, and states that more than half of those wrecked during the past two years have been colliers and vessels of that class. Of the total number, schooners hold the pre-eminence to wrecking, and next to schooners come brigs. While the annexed interesting table shows that the ships to which casualties most frequently happen, are those between 50 and 300 tons burthen, and are usually employed in carrying ores, coal, stone, and coke.

Vessels wrecked under 50 tons	284
51 and under 100 .....	393
101       "       300 .....	557
301       "       600 .....	105
601       "       900 .....	25
901       "       1200 .....	9
1200 and upwards .....	6
Total .....	1379

With the *Wreck Register* a chart is published, on which is clearly defined the various life-boat stations and spots where wrecks have taken place.

One glance at this chart is a stronger appeal to the sympathy of the public than any written or spoken evidence; it is one of those plain facts which we gaze on with a thrill of wonder and pity, asking ourselves how it is possible that at a period like the present, when such incredible sums are poured forth to meet every call upon public charity, and when the value of human life seems to have become so much more highly appreciated, such a constant destruction of human life should happen before our eyes.

During the gales which handed out the past and ushered in the present year, our attention was more than usually drawn to the disastrous effects of the "fury of the waves and winds," together with the long and heartrending list of casualties consequent thereon. The question, "Could not some of those men have been saved?" naturally presented itself.

There are two ways of practically lessening this fearful list with the means possessed. The first can only be provided for by the owners of vessels; and, except in a few of the larger passenger ships, and those belonging to Government, the vessel and her fitting is entirely under the owner's direction, and every extra comfort or advantage dependent upon his orders or pleasure; and although it is evident that the same precautions which

tend to the preservation of life will operate to his pecuniary advantage (the only exception being when a vessel is insured), we find shipowners strongly averse to the comparatively small outlay, and unwilling to look at the probability of the old adage of "penny wise and pound foolish" being verified.

Our first-class merchant vessels are, as a rule, substantially built, well rigged, with good anchors and cables, well manned and commanded. Advantages of this sort we shall call preventive means; but these are not enough, there must be remedial means, as all ships are liable to wrecks, collisions, &c. &c.; and it is help to be brought forward and applied after an accident *has* taken place that is so inadequately supplied.

Remedial measures consist of—ships' life-boats, life-belts, and lines, and are, except when required by law, entirely dependent upon the owners. In our opinion this ought not to be. Government inspectors should be appointed to inquire into and see that due precautions are taken, and means at hand, whereby the lives of the crew may be preserved should any unforeseen accident occur.

The second way to lessen the amount of lives lost, is to provide means on shore, whereby to afford help. To carry this further, we must see to three things—first, placing life-boats round the coast at points where wrecks are most frequent; secondly, the improving existing harbours and erecting of new ones; thirdly, providing rockets and mortar life-saving apparatus, where life-boats are not available.

There has been considerable diversity of opinion as to whether the expense of improving and forming new harbours should fall upon the owners of shipping, as deriving the clearest and most direct benefits, or upon the Government. We are inclined towards the latter. All great works, such as those going on at Dover, Portland, &c., are formed at an expense far beyond the power of any shipping company, and being in reality great national improvements, should necessarily be under the direction of Government. This argument does not, however, in our opinion apply to life-boats, although it is commonly made an excuse by many persons for not supporting the National Life-Boat Institution.

We cannot give our opinion more clearly than by quoting the words of the *Journal of the Institution*, a useful and



deeply interesting little work, published once a quarter by the Society.

"The present system of providing and working life-boats from funds raised by voluntary contributions, aided to a certain extent by Government, is found fully adequate to the performance of this most important work; and as we believe that the men who alone can be depended upon to manage the boats—viz., the local boatmen—can be more readily brought to co-operate in the work with the general public, under the immediate superintendence of local honorary committees of respectable inhabitants in their own neighbourhoods, than they would be under the direction of the coast-guard or other government functionaries."

Next in order to the life-boat as a means of saving life, we find life-belts. Those made upon the plan of Capt. Ward, R.N., are considered the most efficacious, and so much do the members of the Institution value them, that in the Journal we find this assertion:—

"We fully believe if every merchant-vessel were so provided, not half the loss of life which now takes place on our coasts would occur."

A person provided with a good belt cannot sink, and, except in very cold weather, death from exposure is exceedingly rare. Numbers of instances might be quoted in which the belt has been the means of saving whole boats' crews; one instance bears so strongly upon the subject, we cannot refrain from mentioning it.

"On the 27th of February, 1858, the Southwold life-boat went out for practice, and was upset by 'broaching-to' within a short distance of the shore. The whole of her crew, fifteen in number, having on efficient life-belts, were saved, although some of them were floating about for twenty minutes in a broken sea before they were picked up by a boat from the shore. Three gentlemen amateurs, who had declined to put on life-belts, were drowned."

Every vessel ought to be provided with a number of life-belts adequate to the crew, which provision should be considered part of the ship's furniture, and kept in readiness for any emergency. The expense would be very trifling, and need not alarm any shipowner, as they only cost 10s., and, except through accident or wilful neglect, would last for years. In any case, when an accident from collision occurs, all that is required

is, that men who cannot swim, should be supported for a short time—such time indeed until help can reach them. Here necessarily a belt is the great thing, and in ten cases out of twelve would be the means of preserving the sufferer's life.

The financial receipts of the Institution during the year 1861 were 15,092*l.* 10*s.* 10*d.*, 1509*l.* 19*s.* 6*d.* of which was contributed by private persons to defray the expenses of especial life-boats. The expenditure during the same period was 13,995*l.* 2*s.* 10*d.*, and this sum went towards additional life-boat houses and necessary gear; also 3057*l.* 3*s.* 4*d.* on repairs, painting, and inspecting; 1368*l.* 3*s.* 2*d.* in payment of the services to shipwrecked crews; and 1950*l.* 13*s.* 10*d.*, including what was paid by the local branch funds, on coxswains' salaries and practice of crews.

The payments are all placed in the Annual Report of the Institution opposite the services rendered, and after a careful study it is obvious that the expenses of rendering assistance to an imperilled person has been much over-rated. The average payment for saving a man's life is under a pound. If such small cost in the service of humanity was more generally known, how many more of us would gladly subscribe to the Institution, the merits of which are fortunately becoming every day more openly recognised and acknowledged.

In conclusion, a few practical hints as to the rescue of drowning, and restoration of apparently drowned, persons may not come amiss, as any one of us may have sooner or later the misfortune to be present at a time when human life—perhaps one near and dear to us—may absolutely depend upon prompt treatment, and that, too, of the simplest description, which is laid down in such plain words as to be unmistakeable to the most uneducated mind, and requires scarcely any effort of memory.

First, we shall take the "rescue of drowning persons;" and feel we cannot do greater justice to the subject than use the words of Mr. Joseph Hodgson, of Sunderland, frequently known as the "Stormy Petrel," a name gained by his readiness to brave all seas or weather in the endeavour to help his fellow-men.

According to his advice, the first thing to be done on approaching a drowning person is to assure them that they are perfectly safe; and having thus given them a degree of confidence, you must keep off



for a few seconds till they get quiet, then approaching very close, seize them by the hair and turn them as quickly as possible on the back, when a sudden and sharp pull or jerk will cause them to float; you can then turn on your back also and swim for the shore. One great advantage of this method being, that while it enables you to keep your own head up, you can also support that of the person you are trying to save.

If in the sea, it may sometimes be a great mistake to attempt to reach land, as a strong tide will necessarily exhaust you, and probably prove fatal to both. Then, the best plan is to throw yourself on your back and float till help comes.

Much is said of a death grasp, and this Mr. Hodgson says he does not believe in, for as soon as the drowning man begins to feel feeble and to lose recollection, he gradually slackens his hold until he quits it altogether.

A body may often be brought up from the bottom before too late for recovery, by diving for it in the direction of the air bubbles which invariably rise, and then necessarily the instructions as to the treatment of those apparently drowned become of the first importance.

In the first place, send immediately for medical assistance, blankets, and dry clothes; but without waiting idly for their appearance, follow the rules now given. Place the patient upon the ground with his face down, the forehead resting upon his arm. As soon as breathing commences, endeavour to promote natural warmth by exposing the face, neck, and chest (except in very cold weather), drying these with a cloth, and covering the body with any dry clothes at hand, either from your own person or the bystanders.

If breathing is tardy or requires exciting, turn the patient well and quickly on

one side, exciting the nostrils with snuff, hartshorn, and smelling salts, or tickle the throat with a feather, rubbing the chest and face sharply till warm, and then dashing it with cold water; but if breathing does not begin at all, in order to imitate it, replace the patient on his face, raising and supporting his chest upon soft material, then turn the body gently on the side, then on the face, back again, repeating this deliberately and regularly for several minutes, turning about once in every four seconds.

After breathing has been restored, danger is by no means over; so prevent any crowding round, let pure air pass freely over the patient, and continue warm applications and brisk, firm dry rubbing, with occasional spoonfuls of wine or coffee, or if neither be at hand, water, as soon as the power of swallowing is recovered, after which sleep and rest is desirable.

In all cases the above treatment should be persevered in for several hours, as it is a fatally erroneous opinion that persons are irrecoverable because signs of life do not soon make their appearance, and the writer has known instances where several hours have elapsed before the slightest symptom of animation became perceptible.

One more word for the Institution, and we have done. The coasts of the United Kingdom possess one hundred and seventy-six boats. Three have just been forwarded to Spain, making seven purchased by the government of that country; five are now in progress of building by order of the Portuguese authorities; and while we rejoice to think that our sailors will find help upon foreign strands in the time of need, let us not forget that there are hundreds of miles upon our own home coast unprovided with those means, and that solely from the poverty of the Parent Institution.

J. E. A.

## ROLAND THE PAINTER.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

## THE FALLING STAR.

ROLAND had not seen Louise for some time ; but his studies had become so irksome, his life so weary, that he determined to leave England altogether. Before he did so he resolved to seek Louise, and make a last appeal to her. He knew the affection she really entertained for him ; and while he grieved, he could not but admire the firmness and self-denial which Louise displayed in refusing to entertain any thought which appeared degrading in her eyes.

The evening Roland had chosen to visit her was when Mr. Gaffyr had gone with his father and uncle to the seaside, and Roland calculated upon finding Louise entirely alone. It was evening, but the snug little parlour had not yet been lighted up. It was a pretty room, and the windows opened upon a wide expanse of undulating country, reddened by the glare of a lurid sunset, which presaged a heavy storm. The wind was gradually rising—in fact, it already blew with violence ; and soon the rain in heavy drops came pattering against the casement. The wind howled with a melancholy tone through the huge trees which stood near the house. Roland came to the house in a mood which well accorded with the rough night, and was welcomed by Louise kindly, but with as little warmth as possible consistent with preserving a friendly manner. She felt that this coldness was absolutely necessary, much as it grieved her.

Roland did not appear surprised at it ; he returned her greeting as though he understood her motives, and could find no excuse even in his own heart to blame her.

They sat down before the fire—for the autumn nights were already somewhat chilly—and, as if by mutual consent, were for a little time silent. Roland sat before the fire absorbed in thought. He had so often spoken upon the subject which had brought him here now—so often, too, had he received that calm, firm, but sweet and almost reproachful denial—that the young artist was dumb at first when he was in Louise's actual presence.

Louise, too, knowing his thoughts so well, was reserved and agitated, and gazed

with an abstracted look upon the glowing embers—the only light which illumined the apartment. After a long silence, Louise said :

"You do not appear to be well, Roland."

"I am unhappy," answered Roland, abruptly. "You can guess my thoughts. I would not have you consent to my wishes against your conscience. I have already told you what I feel ; you have doubtless not forgotten it."

"I have not forgotten it, Roland," answered Louise, tenderly, but with firmness.

"But it has had no influence upon you, you would say," said Roland, quickly.

"You are right in your surmise, Roland. I can only say to you now as I did then, that I could not yield to your wishes without feeling I had done a criminal act."

"Then I will tempt you no more," said Roland. "In a day or two—in fact, as soon as my father's return—I shall start for Italy."

"Is then my friendship nothing, Roland? Again I repeat I will be, I must be true to the husband I have willingly taken. You ask me to love you. You well know with what deep feelings I do so. Why do you not try to overcome this fatal passion?"

"Ah, Louise ! I strive in vain ; the struggle only wearies my spirit and fetters my intellect. I am a burden to my friends ; my life is miserable. There is no possibility of my succeeding as an artist. I must place myself beyond the temptation of seeing you any more. You say you are wedded, Louise. Yes," he added, scornfully, "wedded to a myth—a shadow ! Or, call it a reality, and try to conjure up its likeness at this moment. There stands the man !" and Roland, in the energy of his passion, pointed into space, as though the bodily presence of M. Rachelle had actually been there. Louise gave a shudder, so strong had been the impression created by the dusky atmosphere of the room and Roland's impassioned tone. "There stands the man ! at this moment, perhaps, giving himself up to all that can debase and humiliate manhood, and even influencing others by his example to follow him in his base career as far as they have power to be wicked. Ah, Louise ! the constancy with which you regard the vows



entered into with M. Rachelle is all that redeems your former love for such a man."

"Your reproaches are justifiable," said Louise; "but have I not paid dearly for my thoughtlessness?"

"Forgive me, Louise. It is cruelty, it is madness, to reproach you; but you do not, you cannot understand how ardently I have pined for your love; how I had hoped, by life-long tenderness and affection, to banish from your mind the remembrances of the last unhappy year. Oh! if you could have known the fullness of my love when you were free to accept it!"

"My dear Roland, cannot you accept my warm feelings for you as a brother?"

"No, Louise. My nature is not capable of gentle friendship; it is swayed only by intense passion or indifference."

"Roland, are we not both making a sacrifice? Remember this: your sacrifice cannot be greater than mine, though more forcibly shown. I cannot explain all my feelings in accepting the hand of M. Rachelle. The human heart is a labyrinth, and it is not always the tenderest, purest feeling which finds the clue to its innermost recesses."

The storm without increased rapidly. After a sudden lull, a fierce gust shook the house like a thunder-clap. Louise was visibly impressed by it.

"I cannot tell why it should be so," she said, "but a strange, almost unearthly sentiment oppresses me to-night. You will forgive me, Roland, but I feel more than I have ever done before a repugnance to hear you repeating these sentiments. There is something in this stormy night that thrills me to the very soul; the wind, too, seems to fill me with melancholy."

"I will leave you," said Roland. "I should not have intruded but for the resolution I have formed to leave England; and I could not do so without seeing you once more."

"No, Roland, do not leave me just now; I never felt the want of companionship so much. I am not superstitious; I never feared aught either in daylight or darkness; but there are times when the most fearless shrink in solemn awe even from themselves—when thoughts will come to us which have a dim suggestiveness not to be driven out by any amount of argument or philosophy."

"I know it," said Roland; "such thoughts have been mine ere now."

"And for that reason, dear Roland, let me implore you, for this night at least, not to speak another word upon the subject you have just referred to. If I have before spoken with resoluteness my denial, I now request you to be silent from another cause. I would ask you rather to aid me, that I may not fail in the principle which I hold to be just and true."

This appeal to Roland's chivalrous feelings had its due weight with him. He loved Louise too well to press any longer what was so painful to her.

Meanwhile the tempest only increased in violence, and the heavy rain coming down the chimney, hissed and sputtered in the fire. For a time they were both silent—a silence which was broken at length by Louise. She said softly and abstractedly, as though she had seen in the glowing coals the scene which she remarked upon:—

"An awful night this must be at sea, Roland. God help those who are tossing upon the ocean on such a night as this!"

"I, too, was thinking of the sea," said Roland. "I wonder my father has chosen a residence near it. Now I feel an intense sadness in listening to the monotonous rush of the waves. Yet what a revelation it was to me when I saw it for the first time, watching it as I did for whole days, as it smiled in the sunshine or frowned in the storm. Buried in a delightful reverie, I would watch from our white cliffs the red sun sinking into the ocean, and still watching till the deep blue of heaven glittered with stars. My soul filled with divine rapture, I could have wished to die at such a moment; and only to have asked one bliss more—the echo of sweet music to lull me into an everlasting slumber."

"You lived in an ideal world then, Roland."

"I pity those who cannot at will do so," said Roland. "It is true I worshipped an ideal. I did not know you then, and yet your image was before me; for when I saw you first, I had but then discovered what I had long sought—the idol of my dreams. Alas! that my hopes should be but dreams also! For to what else can I liken my unaccomplished desires but to a midnight dream, when all is silent as the grave within doors and without—when, as we awake, a mystic voice from afar bids us no longer trust to the illusion?"

They were both again silent for some time.

"Louise," said Roland, abruptly breaking the silence in a hurried questioning tone, "have you no feeling of hatred against this man who has so wronged you?"

"None, Roland. My last prayer will be for his happiness, but most of all for his repentance."

With such an appearance of deep sincerity did Louise speak these few words, that Roland felt entirely hopeless.

"Roland, dear Roland, my friend, my brother, why torment yourself thus?" said Louise.

The storm which had been so sudden and furious was now hushed, and Roland rose to take leave of Louise. She came with him to the little porch in front of the house, and they were surprised to see how clear the sky had already become.

"Take courage, Roland," said Louise; "see, the stars are peeping out. You must remember what your favourite Richter says—that the stars shine brightest in the darkest night. This should be a good omen to you."

"What interpretation will you give to that?" said Roland; and pointing toward the sea, a brilliant star fell as he spoke.

"Something bids me look hopefully into the future, Roland; and hope is sometimes prophecy."

"God grant it may be so! Farewell, farewell, Louise. Perhaps for years."

Mastering his emotion as well as he was able, Roland was hurrying down the lane leading to his uncle's house when some one called out:—

"Is that Mr. Roland Locke?"

Roland replied in the affirmative, and recognised a messenger from the railway station with a telegraphic message from Mr. Gaffyr, requesting Roland to come to him at once.

"You must lose no time, sir, if you are going to-night; the last train will be up in twenty minutes."

Roland hurried into the house, made the best excuse he could to Maude and Alice for his sudden departure, and started immediately.

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### THE WRECK.

MARTIN LOCKE had prophesied truly when he warned his brother of the consequences of his coming to England. The severe blow to the popularity of

Solomon Locke which the public examination of his brother occasioned had not been ameliorated as time went on. The scandal, instead of dying out, only grew stronger with age, so that at last even Mrs. Whymper, who had almost worshipped the reverend gentleman, "felt herself bound, in justice to her sense of propriety, to give him a month's warning."

Mr. Locke's affection for his brother led him to endure all these annoyances calmly, in the hope that they would blow over; but he had not calculated upon the envy, hatred, malice, and all uncharitableness of which the world—even such a little world as that of Ivy Bridge—can be guilty. Martin had foreseen it, having a greater knowledge of the world than his brother; and when he daily saw his prognostications verified, and felt how keenly his brother suffered in spirit, he determined to end it as speedily as he could. His property in Australia had realized a sum sufficient to keep him respectably for the remainder of his life. Nothing would have given him greater pleasure than to have remained with his brother, and have done all he could for the poor inhabitants of Ivy Bridge. But they would not allow him to do so. If he put—as he had done on more than one occasion—a bank-note into the plate when a collection was made, dark rumours were afloat for the remainder of the week respecting it. Even the governors of an asylum to which he had liberally subscribed returned his gift with a few transparent compliments as false as they were cold-hearted. The neighbouring farmers who had frequently called before upon their worthy clergyman now rarely did so, and seldom or never invited him. The generality of his little flock, in fact, now met him upon all occasions with a coldness and constraint which not even the placid temper of Solomon Locke could ignore or be blind to.

Martin, therefore, quietly determined to leave Ivy Bridge as soon as possible, and with this view looked frequently into the advertisements of the London papers for cottages and villas to let. He wished to choose a spot which should be far enough removed from Ivy Bridge to shut him out altogether from his brother's parishioners, but at the same time to be within easy reach, so that they could spend a considerable portion of their time together without difficulty. Martin had also the hope of eventually subduing Roland's pride, and persuading the young



artist to live with him upon an easy allowance, which would leave him at full liberty to follow his art or not.

Such a spot seemed at last to have been met with. An advertisement one day appeared in a leading journal, which would have done honour to the genius of George Robins himself. It described, "A most luxuriant spot, completely embedded in its own grounds, having no need of the graces of art, being so favoured by nature. The sea in front expanded itself into a bay, which impartial lovers of the beautiful had frequently compared to the Bay of Naples. It was protected during the inclement season of the year by an amphitheatre of hills, and was also surrounded by park-like scenery of surpassing beauty. The retiring capitalist or the Indian merchant, whose health has suffered by a protracted stay in the sunny climes of the east, would find here the cheering prospect of renewed health and vigour. The magnificent timber which ornamented the grounds included the monarch of the forest and the stately pine, the graceful larch, the weeping ash, while the verdant sward in front of the house gave at all times a pleasing idea of freshness and fertility. The mansion itself was of stone, partly antique, but, avoiding the faults of the ancient architects, was replete with comfort and convenience. It was situated upon the south coast, and the rent was the merely nominal sum of 70*l.* per year."

Martin had gone down with his brother and Mr. Gaffyr to see this delightful retreat, quite satisfied that the terms would be moderate if it possessed a tenth of the attractions ascribed to it in the advertisement.

We have said already, in describing the interview between Roland and Louise, that the weather was stormy; but here, by the sea, it was still more so. The wind blew a hurricane from the west. The huge dark billows thundered and tossed as far as the eye could reach, and the sun, setting as red as blood, threw upon the steep cliffs that lined the coast a lurid gleam, which suggested baleful ideas of storm and disaster.

Martin, his brother, and Mr. Gaffyr sat and watched it from the window of the hotel where they were staying while arrangements were made for taking the villa. The night was falling. The snowy crest of the surf lost its brilliancy as it dashed upon the shore, now quite up to the base of the cliff. Far upon the sea,

tossed by the waves and swept by the raging spray, might be seen a solitary vessel, which appeared to be at the mercy of the troubled ocean. The darkness thickened, and at length the vessel, whose fate appeared but too certain, could not be seen. Some hours passed away, when an alarm was raised that a large vessel was stranded off the coast. The weather had been hazy and unsettled for some days, so that all vessels had kept out to sea.

Mr. Gaffyr, the clergyman, and Martin went down to the cliff, from which a view could be obtained of the rocky point off which it was said vessels had been frequently wrecked. The dense fog had cleared off to some extent, but the appearance of the sea was awful in the extreme. The huge rolling waves, crested with foam, stood out against the line of light that bounded the horizon like mountain ridges capped with snow. Heavy masses of cloud hung over the scene, while lighter clouds dashed wildly across the sky. There was a little dusky light still remaining in the west, only to show more clearly the horrors of the scene to the spectators on shore. Dusky cliffs surrounded the bay on every side, like rude antique fortresses, while beneath them the boiling ocean raved and thundered and dashed as it had done for ages, seeming to rejoice in its gigantic strength, and the puny efforts of man to resist its power. The ship, with only a few tattered remnants of her sails, had driven full upon the coast. Now rolling her hull upon the mountainous waves, now plunging madly into depths from which it seemed impossible she would ever re-appear, till at length she had found a cradle in the sandy bed, in which for centuries so much life and treasure had been swallowed up for ever.

There was a flash, and a dull sound scarcely heard above the roar of the tempest.

"They are firing signals of distress," said Martin.

Such appeared to be the case, and they went, full of anxiety, down to the shore, where a considerable crowd had congregated. They then perceived that the vessel was a passenger ship, and had been stranded sufficiently near the shore to enable them to discern that her decks were crowded with human beings, who added greatly to the horror of the scene by their lamentations. Some, however, were in a complete stupor from despair; others



crouching down awaited their doom with impassibility; mothers with young children in their arms kneeled wildly down to pray, or covered their faces that they might not see the awful waves that swept up the sides of the vessel, and sometimes washed completely over her. Some unhappy creatures ran about the decks offering money to the seamen to save them. Sorely touched as the hardy sailors were, and always are, at the sight of distress, they could not alleviate it—they could only obey orders in silence, and await calmly the result. Some of them, half stripped, stood ready, in case of need, to throw themselves overboard into the boiling surge, and struggle for land as best they might.

One passenger of dark complexion and foreign aspect was watching the scene on deck intently, but, as it appeared, without fear. His look was determined, but one would also have said uncharitable. If any chance presented itself of help from the shore, he would not be the last man to avail himself of it.

Amongst the spectators on the shore, Mr. Gaffyr and Martin Locke were conspicuous in their endeavours to be of some assistance. Mr. Gaffyr, a town-bred man, had never witnessed such a scene before, and he was shocked beyond measure. Martin had lived a more chequered career. He had not only seen a wreck, but had been nearly lost himself upon one occasion.

His experience was rapidly shown, and inspired the coast-guard with so much confidence in his powers, that he was allowed, at his own request, to assist in firing a rocket to the ship.

After some time this experiment succeeded, a line was thrown to the vessel. Martin was possessed of considerable strength and unbounded courage. "Oh, that the people at Ivy Bridge could see him now," was the curate's inward thought, and not without reason. Looking at his earnestness now, they might have forgiven him much indeed. He looked a very hero!

Communication being established with the ship, many of the passengers crowded to the bulwarks in the hope of being speedily taken off. Amongst these the foreigner of whom we have spoken was conspicuous. Just, however, as the sailors were sending off some of the most timid and nervous of the group, a huge wave washed several of the foremost overboard.

"Martin! Martin!" almost shrieked Solomon Locke, "what are you doing? Stop him, Mr. Gaffyr, for heaven's sake!"

Mr. Gaffyr, whose attention had been too painfully excited for the last few minutes to notice Martin, turned round to ascertain what the curate meant; but before he could utter a word, or make the least effort to restrain him, Martin had plunged into the sea.

"He will be lost!—he must be lost! I shall never see him again!" said the curate, wringing his hands in despair.

Mr. Gaffyr tried his utmost to console him, but a sharp pang of doubt shot through his heart while he did so.

Martin had fearlessly plunged into the sea, in the hope of saving one at least of those who had been washed from the bulwark. The dusky evening, and the violence of the sea, however, prevented him for a long time from making much way.

At length, after battling long and fruitlessly with the waves, he saw a dark form rise to the surface. He clutched it vigorously; then, seeing no one else near him, he turned round, and made an effort to regain the shore. An advancing wave lent him its assistance, and in a few minutes, amidst tremendous cheers from the people on the shore, Martin brought the man safe to land.

The stranger was quite exhausted, and his preserver almost equally so. With assistance, which was readily offered, Mr. Gaffyr had them both carried to the hotel. Too much engrossed with their immediate anxieties, Mr. Locke and Mr. Gaffyr never left the rescued man the whole night, but they learned that nearly all the passengers had been brought to land.

The vigorous health and hardy constitution of Martin soon recovered from the effects of his late struggle, and he seemed by the next morning none the worse for his adventure. Not so the man whom he had saved. The physician who had seen him declared that he could not long exist. His frame had been debilitated by an irregular and dissipated life, and the shock had been too great to give any hope of recovery.

The morning had dawned before the curate and his friend went to bed. Before doing so, they went in once more to see how their patient progressed. As they did so, they could not fail to remark upon the handsome features of the stranger. He seemed to have been possessed of a good intellect, but looked jaded and care-



worn, though only in the prime of life. The stern lines of care and feverish dissipation were but too plainly discernible through the manly beauty which still remained. The sharply-defined brow, the sunken eyes, the pale face illuminated and made almost ghastly by the glow of the rising sun, the black matted hair thrown back from the forehead—all this made a deep impression upon Mr. Gaffyr and the kind-hearted clergyman, and they could not refrain from expressions of admiration blended with deep pity.

They sat down to a late breakfast, Mr. Locke holding his brother's hand in his with almost child-like affection, and gratitude that Martin was once more safe and well.

Why Mr. Gaffyr telegraphed to Roland may be briefly told:—The day had passed gloomily away, not, however, without considerable excitement in consequence of the wreck. While they were at supper, a waiter came and asked Mr. Gaffyr to take care of some cases and luggage which he said the mate of the wrecked vessel had identified as belonging to the stranger who still lay insensible. Mr. Gaffyr looked at the name, and with a start read that of M. Rachelle.

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### THE VALLEY OF THE SHADOW.

MR. GAFFYR, without making known the fact he had just heard, instantly communicated with Roland, to whom the intelligence came like a thunder-clap. This was a chance of which, in the fervour of his passion, he had never dreamed.

That M. Rachelle should be coming to England at all, was in itself grave matter for conjecture, and the first thought that entered Roland's mind was that he had discovered the almost miraculous escape of his wife, had repented of his vile conduct toward her, and was now seeking her out in order to make some reparation for his former want of feeling.

Another idea came swiftly to supplant this. He could not believe, when he reflected upon the past, that M. Rachelle had the magnanimity to do such an act as this. He was more inclined upon second thoughts to imagine that the dread of losing his lately-acquired fortune had influenced him solely; that he hoped, in fact, to influence her to forego all claims upon the property.

Roland well knew that M. Rachelle had so far injured his own prospects by his vicious propensities, that, without this additional income, he would be reduced to beggary.

A third suggestion presented itself, which was, that having become still further involved, M. Rachelle had only come to England to avoid the pressing demands of his creditors. But why in this case should Mr. Gaffyr suggest his coming? or still less, why should he hint at the probable necessity for Louise coming also?

It was a wonderful event, indeed, that his father, in his anxiety to do good, should have rescued from a watery grave the only man on earth whom he wished to avoid.

For a moment a dark thought entered Roland's mind which made him shudder, as the full horror of the idea flashed upon his mind. For a moment he could hardly help indulging in a prospect of the happy future which would have been in store for him had M. Rachelle been lost. Instantly, however, this feeling was dismissed. His teaching had been too pure, too true, too Christian-like, to allow such a thought as this more than a momentary dwelling-place in his mind; but with a heart full of anxiety he started at once for the coast.

When Roland saw M. Rachelle, he was greatly moved. To the rest M. Rachelle was a stranger, and consequently they could not judge of the ghastly effect of disease and dissipation which Roland could detect so plainly.

Immediately after Roland's arrival, the physician called and advised if his patient had any affairs to arrange, to take advantage of the temporary restoration of M. Rachelle's faculties which had taken place, as it was impossible he could long exist.

At this trying juncture Roland took counsel with his father and uncle. He briefly narrated the incidents of Madame Rachelle's escape and recovery. The conclusion they came to was that M. Rachelle, while able to comprehend it, should be informed cautiously of all the circumstances; and that Louise, if Roland thought her capable of bearing the trial, should be telegraphed to at once.

Roland acquainted the dying man with these incidents, and did so with the utmost delicacy. He had the greatest difficulty to introduce the subject, for it was evident that M. Rachelle was suffering



keenly from the pangs of remorse. Roland shuddered when he saw the expression of intense suffering which was visible upon the wretched man's features, but he could not help feeling that it was the natural retribution for the grief he had wantonly inflicted on a heart so much nobler and purer than his own. He could well imagine how the sinking spirit of the man must have shrunk appalled from the awful thoughts conjured up in his mind by a recollection of his past life, and by the dim obscurity of the future. Not that he wished to live so much as he feared to die. Life had lost its charm for him. The only friendship or affection he had sought had withered and died for want of strength and purity. He was left alone, shunned and avoided by all.

He was deeply influenced by the strange narrative imparted to him by Roland, and also by the thought of his approaching end, which the physician deemed it imprudent longer to conceal from him. He begged earnestly to be allowed to see his wife once more.

"Your request has been anticipated," Roland said; "we have already telegraphed to Madame Rachelle, and doubtless she will arrive speedily; but let me implore you, for her sake, do not grieve her."

"Do not fear, Mr. Locke," said the dying man; "the greatest trial I have now to bear is in the fact that I have so little deserved the affection of such a woman as Louise. She was an angel of purity, sweetness, and patience, and my reward has been to leave her destitute and friendless through my extravagance."

"Neither destitute nor friendless, believe me, M. Rachelle. Never while I have a brain to conceive, or a hand to execute, shall Madame Rachelle be either destitute or friendless."

"Leave me now awhile," said M. Rachelle; "I would struggle with my guilty conscience, and pray for pardon and peace."

Slowly and sadly the day passed on. A few hours after this Louise came. She was told the events of the preceding day. M. Rachelle had hovered for hours upon the brink of eternity. Like a dying lamp the flame of life had often flickered up for a moment, but it was evident that it would soon go out for ever.

M. Rachelle had been sleeping for some time; when he awoke, he saw Roland standing by the bedside,

"Let me thank you," said M. Rachelle, "for your tenderness and goodness to me. I have learned divine love through human sympathy and forgiveness, and the future has now less terror for me. But tell me, have you yet heard from Madame Rachelle?"

Roland opened the door and beckoned. In a few seconds Louise was standing by her husband's side.

"Louise!" said he, clutching her hand convulsively, "can you forgive me?"

"As I hope to be forgiven, Ernest."

"Ah, that I had your simple, earnest faith; I could then die happy. Can you believe that the All-powerful will pardon such as I?"

"God forbid we should doubt His mercy," said Louise, fervently; "or this world would be dark indeed."

"True, true. Only Omnipotent power could have directed Mr. Locke to the sepulchre to save you from a horrible death. But I am dying! — dying! — Louise. Call the good clergyman, and the brave man who rescued me from the wreck."

Martin and Solomon came at his request.

"Give me your hand, Louise," said the dying man.

She did so wonderingly.

"And yours, Mr. Locke."

Roland did so, believing that he was wandering in his mind. Yet he fancied there was a certain animation and energy in his look.

"Mr. Locke," said M. Rachelle, "I have called your kind friends in order that their presence might add weight to my dying request. Do not allow the prejudices of the world, or the conventionalities of society, to weigh with you for one moment. You love Louise as I never loved her till now. You saved her from a horrible death. I can see plainly what I can well believe you have not acknowledged even to yourself, that I alone stand between you and your happiness. This barrier will exist but for a few hours, and it is my fervent hope that Louise will become your wife as soon as I am laid in the grave; and may God grant that no misdeed, or evil influence of mine, may cast a shade upon your tranquil happiness."

These were his last coherent words; he sank from hour to hour, till, like the approach of night, the everlasting shadow came.



## CHAPTER XXX.

## BETTER LATE THAN NEVER.

ARTHUR was still uneasy as to the place he held in Mary Gabriel's affections. He would have given much to know how far he could depend upon her influence with her father as opposed to that of Mr. Gaffyr. He was extremely bitter against his uncle for the prejudice with which he had inspired Mary.

He had endeavoured also to influence Roland, but Roland was by no means certain of Arthur's good intentions. Mary was staying with Martin Locke at the villa he had taken, where also Louise still remained.

Louise and Mary had become fast friends. One day as they were walking together on the cliffs they met Arthur. Mary had not expected to see him, and was somewhat embarrassed.

Arthur jumped up suddenly, and held out his hand.

"I could not leave you without bidding you farewell," said Arthur.

"You leave us, then?" said Mary, faintly.

"Yes, Mary," he replied, with an emotion which was unusual to him, "we have been too much together for my peace of mind."

"Pray do not be hasty, Arthur. When I told you that your uncle had not so good an opinion of you as I could have wished, I did not mean to imply that I wished to break our engagement."

"No matter, dearest, I have thought earnestly of what my uncle has said, and feel that I have in some things been much to blame. I will now for a time devote myself earnestly to a profession; and should I succeed, and should you still retain the feelings which I fondly hoped you felt for me, then I will claim you. I will set at defiance all my uncle's sneers. Farewell, dear Mary, think as kindly of me as you can."

Mary would have begged him to stay, but the moment had passed, and Arthur was gone.

In a short time Roland joined them. Louise appealed to him against Mr. Gaffyr's harsh decision, but Roland was unwilling to take Arthur's part after the folly he had seen. "He is willing to do right if quite convenient to him," said Roland; "but then he is not unwilling to do wrong also."

They soon met Mr. Gaffyr, surrounded by a knot of boatmen, fishermen, and

idlers, to whom he was propounding the merits of an invention for the management of a life-boat. It was in vain the unsophisticated sons of the sea refuted many of his ideas, or showed him how futile some of his plans were. If knocked down at one point, he rose so vigorously to renew the combat at another, that, like Wellington's heroes, he never knew when he was beaten. They laughed at his enthusiasm, but remembering his kindness on the night of the wreck, they were quite ready to assist him.

Roland, Louise, and Mary watched him from a distance, unwilling to disturb him. As soon, however, as they came nearer, Mr. Gaffyr saw them, and could see by Mary's face that something had gone wrong.

Roland briefly explained.

"Now don't look serious, my dear girl," said Mr. Gaffyr. "If Arthur has any real love for you we shall soon find it out, and then we will make you as happy as Roland and Louise, who are going to migrate to some happy valley, beyond which they don't intend to look for the sorrows and paltry strife of the great world."

"But it is to the great world I must look as an artist, after all, and my difficulty is, that it does not seem disposed to look at me."

"You have still, then, some artistic leanings, Roland?"

"More so than ever," Roland replied. "I won Louise as an artist, and she shall, please God, be an artist's wife. I feel the stirring of a new ambition within me. My father would provide for our wants, and now, too, Mynheer Krall may be consulted; but still I would rather Louise should, as my wife, be supported by my own talents."

"My dear boy, I like to hear you speak like that. Now you will stand a chance. If you can tear yourself away from this sweet creature, go to Italy for a few months, and work up something for the next exhibition. You won't do anything if you stay here."

Mr. Gaffyr said this with a sly glance toward Louise. In fact, he now always spoke of the union of Roland and Louise as an accomplished fact. Roland, however, although some time had passed away, had not again spoken of his love. They had now wandered to some distance from Mr. Gaffyr, who was giving Mary a quiet lecture.

"What think you of all this, Louise?" said Roland. "You will not refuse me

any more I should hope," and his arm stole gently round her.

"No," said Louise, quietly. "I will answer now in the words of Ruth, 'Whither thou goest, I will go; thy people shall be my people, and thy God my God.'"

Roland thanked that God in his heart who, through so much disappointment and strange events, had finally brought this happy issue to pass. He would be a great artist—he was ambitious—but artistic fame was as a feather in the balance compared to this. This beautiful, sweet, talented woman, whose character had been refined like gold in the crucible of sorrow, now tendered him her large and loving heart so freely. But he would not accept the precious gift selfishly, he would be worthy of her. He would take Mr. Gaffyr's advice; the sting of failure had not yet been alleviated. With love he would have victory. The struggle would be great to rend himself from her in the first moment of the free and blissful communion; but he felt how, through want of courage, determination, and firmness of purpose, he had failed to win her love at the first. That was a lesson not to be thrown away. Now he would fix her affection upon such sure foundations that nothing should ever shake it again.

## CHAPTER XXXI.

### ALL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL.

IT is unnecessary to speak in detail of Roland's journey to Italy. We will therefore content ourselves by taking a peep, and it must be for the last time, at Roland in his studio. He had determined to settle at Ivy Bridge. He was so moved by his earlier associations with the place that he did not care to leave it. He was melted to tears when he saw the old village again after his Italian journey. So strong and enduring are our earlier impressions, that little feelings, circumstances, and associations are embalmed and consecrated in our memories as long as we live.

Need we say how swiftly Louise was beside him, or how, in the tender and affectionate letters he had received from her, he had traced that higher development of soul and intellect, which, even more than her beauty, captivated him now? Her pure soul had not been dimmed by the breath of the world, and her feelings

and ideas came forth spontaneous and fresh, as in her girlhood.

We, however, were to introduce Roland in his studio. He was sitting before a large picture which he had conceived and partly executed in Italy, but was now finishing for a forthcoming exhibition. Louise had crept noiselessly into the studio and stood watching him earnestly. At last, tired with her own silence, she said:—

"I wish, Roland, you would not work so hard; you seem never to have the brush out of your hand."

"Don't fear, my love, I shall hurt myself with hard work. What happier state can there be than a life of hard work, at least when it is for those we love?"

Louise pouted a little.

"Perhaps it may not succeed after all," she said, "and then you will be disappointed and unhappy."

"No, I will not, my love—I promise you."

"What will you do, then? Give it up, I should hope."

"By no means, my little woman. I shall paint another."

"And all the labour devoted to this will have been lost time."

"Not so, my love; practice is surely worth something. I shall go on, and not wait like a noodle for my turn at the wheel of fortune. I shall show a bold front to her ladyship, and let her see that I am determined to win her smiles whether she pleases or not."

"You are sanguine, dear Roland."

"Only determined, my love, not sanguine. I cannot be sanguine when I have known men of original genius pine and die in obscurity, and the world has found out their merit only when it has been too late to benefit the possessor of the fatal gift."

So Roland worked hard and finally sent his picture to the gallery. It was successful beyond his utmost anticipations. As some of our readers may not have seen the following critique from the *Thunderer*, we hasten to gratify them.

"AN ITALIAN FESTA, BY ROLAND LOCKE.—This charming work is one of the gems of the exhibition. We hear it has been already purchased by Sir Thomas Eazell for 500*l.*, and we may congratulate the worthy baronet and esteemed connoisseur upon his excellent bargain.

"Mr. Locke has indeed made good use of his Italian tour, and has more



than redeemed the promise of his former picture. We did not criticize his earlier work, for, mingled with many beauties, we could detect faults and errors in judgment, which could only have resulted from haste and want of care. Now, however, we can give the talented artist our entire approbation. The picture is exquisite in tone, colour, conception, and execution. The bold group of figures dancing in the foreground is executed with a precision and spirit which leaves nothing to be desired, and forms a striking contrast to the golden haze which hangs upon the mountains on the opposite shore of the lake. At a little distance from the foreground we perceive the masts and riggings of numerous vessels, all decorated for the holiday with flags and streamers—an opportunity for a rich display of colour, of which Mr. Locke has taken the fullest advantage, without ever degenerating into gaudiness or extravagance. The minor details of Italian festivity—such as the comical fellow selling chocolate and macaroni, but who looks as though he will shortly join in the dance, let who will attend to business, the performances of our old friend *Punch* in the background, together with the varied expressions and movements of the crowd—all merit our warmest commendation."

Our friends are more apt to be blind to our merits than entire strangers. It created, therefore, no surprise in Roland's mind that Professor Malztig, when he saw the picture, had many faults to find with it. Roland knew it would not entirely please him, but he knew also that a new era in art had arisen since the professor's youthful days, and that it was but wasting time to study the cold abstraction of the ideal, for which the professor had pined all his life, but which found less favour daily with the public.

"Mine Gott, vat you call dis?" said Malztig. "Have you seen de vorks of Michael Angelo for noting?—Poetry and painting go together no longer, I tink."

"But, my dear sir," said Mr. Gaffyr, who was present, and who had come up from Ivy Bridge "express" to see Roland's picture, and who when he read the critique in the *Thunderer*, danced round the table, more like an Ojibbeway Indian than the respectable elderly gentleman and sober critic we have heretofore introduced to the reader—"my dear sir," said that gentleman, in a deprecatory tone, "surely you must admit the picture is not without poetic feeling."

"It is noting but cold reality," said Malztig. "Mine Gott, vat vil become of high art?"

"Malztig is getting out of temper," whispered Mr. Gaffyr; "we must let him alone till he comes round."

In fact, the professor criticized and quizzed the picture, and pretended to dislike it—bouncing out of the room at last with half-a-dozen oaths in as many languages.

As they left the building shortly after, and passed St. Martin's Church, there stood the professor on the steps of the church, his white hair streaming in the wind, as he looked out anxiously for his old friend and pupil.

"Vere are you going?" said he.

"Back to the hotel to dine," said Mr. Gaffyr. "You must come with us."

"No, mine Gott, it shall not be so."

"Why not?"

"You shall dine wiz me."

They agreed, and set off at once. On their way they met Arthur Gaffyr, who had also read the critique in the *Thunderer*, and was warm in his congratulations.

Mr. Gaffyr received his nephew cordially. During Roland's absence, we may remark, Arthur had seen the propriety of turning over a new leaf in the chapter of life. Mr. Gaffyr perceiving this had not been slow to encourage him, and had retracted the unfavourable opinion with which he had inspired Mary Gabriel. Mary being a gracious damsel, did not hinder this favourable state of things by any foolish hesitation, and had already consented to "name the day."

When they reached the professor's, Roland was pleased also to see his old fellow-student Jack Edie. Jack, however, had given up all idea of distinguishing himself as an artist, and now confined his efforts to some fancy placards and tickets in the window of the cheese-mongery establishment in Holborn, which, being of a character not usually seen in conjunction with "Prime Dorset," or "Old Cheddar," had improved that old-established business amazingly. Jack's father had left him to conduct it entirely, having retired to a snug cottage at Hampstead, where he spent his time cultivating botany, and in the perusal of the *Trumpet of Zion*, which still maintains a prosperous career under the editorship of the Reverend Josiah.

Of course Roland and Louise became man and wife. What could they do better? Mr. Gaffyr had undertaken the

task of acquainting Mynheer Krall with all the wonderful events of his daughter's history. Much, however, as the worthy merchant rejoiced to find his daughter alive again, no inducement was strong enough to tempt him to leave Rotterdam; Roland and Louise, therefore, when they were united, decided upon spending the honeymoon at Rotterdam; an event which created so much joy, and caused such an increased consumption of Schiedam, that it was rumoured a distillery was enlarged in consequence.

Mr. Gaffyr, who was always delighted to patronize anybody, now that Roland was disposed of, fixed upon Cecily. The simple-minded and affectionate girl became like a daughter to him, returning his kindness with interest, till she was well and happily married.

Should any reader be desirous for a moral to the foregoing history, the Author begs leave to mount the rostrum, and preach a short lay sermon.

Our moral then is, "The satisfaction, happiness, and moral dignity which man attains to by labour." We have endeavoured to show that Roland would never have succeeded, spite of his evident talent, had he not at length devoted himself, heart and soul, to the object in view. If the pathway to the Temple of Fame were strewn with roses, could we award equal praise to the possessor of its triumphs? No! our sympathies are with the man of lofty soul, and never-failing courage, who, wasting no time in vague dreams, resolves to win the goal by patience, hope, and well-directed toil. Even should he fail with these qualities, his struggle will at least have elevated him in his own esteem, and in the eyes of those who are dear to him. And how often does the student, holding fast to these principles, enter into the sacred shrine; while the coward, lingering with feeble envy upon the threshold, awakens only our contempt and disdain.

### GRETCHEN'S SONG AT THE SPINNING-WHEEL.

From *Faust*.

My rest is gone,  
My heart is sore;  
I'll find it O never,  
And never more!

Where I have not him  
The grave I see,  
The world entire  
Is lost to me.

My brain, alas!  
Is whirling round;  
My head and sense  
No longer sound.

My rest is gone,  
My heart is sore;  
I'll find it O never,  
And never more!

On him alone  
I gaze at eve;  
For him alone  
The house I leave.

His stately walk,  
His noble form,  
His mouth's sweet smile,  
His look so warm.

His speech so full  
Of magic bliss,  
His tender grasp—  
And O his kiss!

My rest is gone,  
My heart is sore;  
I'll find it O never,  
And never more!

My bosom burns  
To be his own;  
O could I press him,  
And hold him long!

And kiss him so  
As I desire;  
And in his warm  
Embrace expire!



## DANTE.

THAT there are periods of the world's history in which Providence has, as it were, palpably and visibly interposed in mundane affairs must, we think, be obvious to every reflective mind, so clearly evidenced have been these manifestations of Divine power and wisdom in the startling changes effected by them in the destinies of men and nations. These periods, during which it would seem as though the hand of God were actually put forth to the work, renovating and renewing all things, and giving a fresh life and impetus to the vast machinery of the universe, are termed by the historians "epochs of transition." We meet with one of these epochs in the Middle Ages, extending from about the middle of the thirteenth century to the early years of the fourteenth.

About this period we find that the Church was gradually resigning the political guardianship she had hitherto exercised over the infancy of her people, now old enough and strong enough to defend their cause with their own hands. She was slowly withdrawing from the arena of strifes and disputations into the quietude of the spiritual domain. Four œcumenical councils—one of Lateran, two of Lyons, and one of Vienna, assembled within the period of something less than one hundred years—had already extended far and wide the knowledge of her dogmas, drawn closer the reins of discipline, and provided for the reform of morals. Four newly-instituted religious orders—those of St. Dominick and St. Francis, the Augustines, and the Fathers of Mercy—had, in the opinion of the Romanists at least, multiplied in all directions the lights of instruction and the works of love.

Turning our eyes again in another direction, we discern on the shores of Africa the failure of the Crusades—the last great efforts of Christianity to cross its European frontiers. But these frontiers it was now in turn compelled to defend; in the north against the incursions of the Mongol hordes, while in the south it had to wrest them from the grasp of the Moor. Satisfied with the preservation of its independence without, it employed from henceforth its forces within. To the glorious era of conquest succeeded the laborious era of political organization. The papal empire had lost the homage of its most illustrious vassals, along with its ancient title of

universal supremacy. Freed from the centralization with which the papacy had menaced them, new nationalities quickly sprung up, as quickly established themselves, and fixed their respective limits, though not without numerous wars and much diplomacy—the first rudiments of international law. The feudal aristocracy had ceased to be the exclusive power before which several generations had bent in mute submission. It was now to enter the lists, either armed or by negotiation, on the one hand with royalty, which had separated herself from it, and on the other with the clergy and people, who loudly and energetically reclaimed their franchise. Under the titles of States, Diets, and Cortes, certain representative assemblies existed, wherein the three orders appeared as the guardians and protectors of the moral, the military, and the financial interests of nations. But, above all, the third estate—the issue of the communal emancipation, augmented by the accession of a large number of freed serfs, ingenious in maintaining in its ranks that union which is strength, and skilful in forming alliances with powers older than itself—progressively encroached on the share allotted to it in the public weal. Local and arbitrary customs ceded to the general authority of princely decrees, as well as to the learned authority of Roman jurisprudence. The newly-codified laws were put in execution through the local ministry of a sedentary magistracy which admitted plebeians into its tribunals.

Pacific revolutions were also accomplished in the empire of the mind. Theology, it is true, still swayed the sceptre of the sciences; but it beheld these sciences growing up around her without dismay. The voyages of Marco Polo, the missions of some poor monks through the deserts of Northern Asia, the ships of the Genoese states driven by the winds to the shores of the Canary Islands, had increased the boundaries of the known world. The discovery of the mariner's compass, of spectacles, and of gunpowder, had at once given evidence of and opened the way to still further discoveries in Nature hitherto unsuspected. In all parts, schools, both varied and special, were rapidly being established. Paris had in this movement set the first example, imitated before the lapse of a century by Oxford, Bologna, Padua, Salamanca, Upsal,



Lisbon, and Rome. The progress effected by the arts had been still more rapid. The time of great inspirations had already passed away, that of analytic labours had commenced. To the chivalric epics and the lyric poems of an anterior age, which had been sung, succeeded a poetry of a totally opposite description—a poetry allied to allegory and satire, didactic, frequently pedantic, and which, abandoned by music, retained nothing more than the bare rhyme. Prose, in its turn, had wrested the written word from the laws of rhythm, in order to subject it to the dry rules of a yet ill-established grammar. It made its first and timid efforts in the collections of laws and histories, and determined the character of modern languages. It was the same with the arts of design—architecture, painting. Finally, commerce, which under favour of the Crusaders had widened the circle of its maritime enterprises, now occupied itself in exploring the paths of the earth, and in multiplying on all sides vast trading entrepôts. Manufacturing industry flourished in the cities under the protection of municipal liberties, while the transformation from serfage to vassalage encouraged agriculture in the same way as formerly the change from slavery to serfage had regenerated it.

Amid these ever-shifting forms of human activity philosophy could not remain stationary. The noise and bustle of the exterior world could not fail to penetrate its deepest solitudes, effect a revolution in many hearts, and prolong the duration of the most serious contemplations. Generous minds are ever unwilling to remain below the facts of which they are the daily witnesses, and great events provoke great conceptions. But the movement now in operation was a movement of retreat and interior organization, wherein foreign elements, hitherto confounded together, were now in process of separation, or were attracting to themselves homogeneous elements formerly separated. This movement, by regenerating itself in philosophy, was reduced into reflection, abstraction, recomposition—in other words, into the very acts which constitute philosophic science. Thus the efforts of the age bore upon it and determined the exercise of all its forces.

Man came to the aid of circumstances. In the front rank we discern the sovereign pontiffs: Innocent IV., whose undaunted courage ruled the thirteenth century, sought also to reign by the sway of the intellect. Obligated to fly from city to city, seeking the shelter of foreign roofs, he

led with him, as the sole ornament of his exile, a band of scholars who formed in their own persons a complete university. Later, extending his solicitude to all the schools of the Christian world, he grew uneasy at seeing the crowd, while flocking around the professorial chairs of jurisprudence, deserting the lessons of philosophy. In his anxiety to reconcile all minds with this study, he attached thereto many temporal interests, by directing that it should form an indispensable preliminary to the attainment of ecclesiastical honours and benefices. Urban IV. commanded that physics and morality should be taught at Rome, and under his own eyes, by Thomas Aquinas. The pontiff himself was accustomed every day after dinner to propose certain philosophical subjects for dissertation among his cardinals, in which controversies he loved to take part. This honourable familiarity in some measure consoled science for the insolent contempt with which it was treated by the tinselled histrions and iron-shod blockheads of the day. Upon the papal throne, in the person of Clement IV., Roger Bacon found the sole protector of his calumniated labours. Other bearers of the tiara also not only looked with a favourable and benevolent eye upon the labours of science, but could also boast possession of personal scientific merits of no mean order. Such were Peter of Tarentum, an orator, canonist, and metaphysician, who assumed the title of Innocent V.; and John XXI., better known as Peter the Spaniard, who was the author of a *Logic* which on its first appearance was hailed with unanimous approbation, and for a length of time remained a classic book.

Many, also, among the temporal princes imitated these examples: as, for instance, Frederick II., Emperor of Germany, the bearer of four crowns, whose reign was but a forty years' war; by turns legislator and tyrant; a barbarian conqueror beneath his tents in Lombardy, a voluptuous sultan in his harems of Apulia and Sicily; a troubadour from taste, and a philosopher perhaps through ostentation. During the leisure hours which this monarch passed in his sumptuous library, the Greek and Arabian manuscripts were frequently unrolled before him. It would appear that he was desirous of endowing Europe with these treasures, and in a manifesto drawn up by his chancellor, Pierre des Vignes, he announced the translation of several works, and probably of some writings of Aristotle. Science met with no less favour



at the hands of King Robert of Naples, who was lauded after his death as a consummate sage; and of Alphonse of Castille, who well deserved the title of scholar; as well as at the court of England, where the fickle crowd flocked to the lessons of Duns Scotus. But nowhere better than in France was royalty honoured by the influence which it exercised on the culture of human wisdom. Here we see Thomas Aquinas invited to the table of St. Louis, and the monarch causing the sudden inspirations of the "Angelic doctor" to be taken down in writing by his secretaries; Vincent de Beauvais admitted in capacity of reader into the intimacy of the same prince; the Sorbonne founded; Philip the Bold giving as preceptor to his son the celebrated Egidius Colonna. We may here remark that it was the benefactions of the French kings which caused the prosperity of the University of Paris; they imparted to it that *prestige* which attracted to its benches forty thousand students of all nations, captivated by the eloquence and learning which proceeded from its halls the most illustrious foreigners, and rendered it worthy of being hailed by the Pope as the source of all truth and the seat of all knowledge and wisdom.

The spiritual power and the secular power, so frequently in arms against each other, agreed then in their action upon the labours of the intellect. Both secured to conscientious studies, security, liberty, and leisure. Both, above all, by giving to instruction a public consecration, imposed upon it the abnegation of personal rivalries, and formed it to habits of gravity and conciliation.

One of the most signal effects of this protection of the great was the more rapid multiplication of books and translations; the access, rendered daily more easy, to the knowledge of antiquity and the Oriental doctrines. The last writers saved from the ruins of Rome had been, with the *Organon* of Aristotle, and the books of St. Denis the Areopagite, the sole initiators of the early scholastics. Later, the crusades had familiarized the Latins with the languages of Greece and the East; the works of St. John of Damascus were translated, and William, Abbot of Saint Denis, brought with him from Constantinople certain manuscripts, among which might be found the Physics, Metaphysics, and Morality of Aristotle. Already had the hardy pilgrims of knowledge proceeded to search out the Mahomedan science at the schools of Toledo

and Cordova; but it was, above all, about the period of which we are writing that Hellenicism and Orientalism interfered with an unexpected display of strength in the philosophical destinies of the East. The diversity of idioms was no longer an obstacle for an age which had beheld the conquest of the Byzantine empire and the invasion of Egypt by the French armies: in the Latin language appeared the works of Avicenna and of Averros; Moses Maimonides made known at the same time the learned labours of the Mussulman doctors, and the dreams of the Jewish Cabala; while the *Almagest* of Ptolemy, the *Timæus* of Plato, the books of Proclus, and many others of lesser renown, found, also, able and learned interpreters. But far above that of all the rest was the success of Aristotle pre-eminently conspicuous: his works, which had already been translated from the Arabian version, were now re-translated from the original text. Some few treatises even found their way into the vulgar tongue. The—at first threatening—opposition of the University of Paris, which had procured in a provincial council the condemnation of the peripatetic doctrines, having been moderated by the instrumentality of Pope Gregory IX., finally gave place to a general tolerance, and the university bending to the examples of the most highly venerated doctors, who covered the Stagirite with their mantles, ended by admitting him with them, not only into the precincts, but into the very heart of the school. At the commencement of the fourteenth century, Antiquity and the East received in some sort a solemn greeting and admission into the Christian republic, when, at the Council of Vienna, it was decreed that, in the four principal universities, and at whatever place the Roman court should sojourn, professorships of Hebrew, Chaldean, Arabian, and Greek should be established. This authority accorded to the ancients and the Arabians was not by any means tyrannical in its principle, it was due to the exertions of a long series of laborious, and sometimes sublimely inspired, men, who represented the learned tradition of humanity. If this tradition cannot be accepted without examination, neither can it be rejected without imprudence. It is in a wise economy of the experience of the past for the needs of the future that resides the secret of all scientific progress. And sad indeed must be considered the fate of those solitary generations which not having received the heritage of in-



struction, or having repudiated it, are constrained to recommence, feeble and mortal, the work of ages.

Thus, whilst contemporary events communicated to philosophy a lasting movement, and while the favour and goodwill of the powerful gave this movement a determinate aim, the apparition of ancient and foreign doctrines marked its departing point.

But want of space forbids our entering at greater length into a consideration of the state of the scholastic philosophy of the thirteenth century, the century in which it may be said to have attained its apogee, and which was also the century of its decline; such considerations, besides, would draw us too far from the matter more immediately before us. Of the decadence, however, of the scholastic philosophy we will permit ourselves to take a cursory review, as this decadence bears more directly on our present subject.

Amid the brilliant triumphs achieved by this scholastic philosophy, it had not escaped reproach. In these bellicose times, those who were interdicted by their profession from breaking a lance or crossing steel in the arena of arms, carried their ardour into the tourneys of words. Controversy had become the ruling passion of the day. Aged and white-haired men might be seen wildly declaiming in the streets, and fields, and groves, discussing each syllable and each letter of a discourse or writing. They extended their argumentations like nets, set forth their syllogisms like ambushes, multiplied combinations of words as nature multiplies combinations of things; and by dint of innumerable distinctions, proved and denied in turn the truth, the falsity, and the uncertainty of one and the same maxim. But in the same way as that boisterous multitude of which the poet speaks, is hushed to silence at the advent of some personage illustrious by his services and his virtues, hanging, as it were, suspended upon the pacific words which fall from his lips, so did this disputatious crew of scholars, old and young, seem on a sudden to forget its zealous and fiery contentions when the great masters of thought appeared in its midst. But the disorder recommenced when they had passed away. Another generation arose, and to the men of genius succeeded men of talent.

Three individuals—namely, Raymond Lully, John Duns Scotus, and Occam—open the era of the decadence. On the

one part, Raymond flattered the dangerous inclinations of the dialecticians of the day by offering them, in his combined art, a mechanical game from whence might be deduced, without delay, and without effort, all the consequences of the given principles. On the other hand, this doctor, born under a Majorcan sky, and in the immediate vicinity of the Mahomedan rule, had, in the course of his wanderings on the coast of Africa and the Levant, imbibed all the ardour of the Arabian and Alexandrian mysticism. This mysticism he poured forth upon the crowd which the admiration of his adventurous life had drawn around him. Duns Scotus, more calm perhaps, but no less eager to reduce to problems the doctrines of his predecessors, denied the possibility of meeting with certainty in the knowledge acquired by the senses. Genera and species, on the contrary, appeared to him primordial realities: he peopled the science of beings with reason arbitrarily conceived, and reviving the opinions of the ancient realists, he concocted a formula of the most audacious idealism. Occam—the knight errant of controversy—who passed his days in religious, political, and literary quarrels, in his youth at Oxford, at Paris under Philip the Fair, in Germany with Louis of Bavaria, raised the glove in the name of the sectarians. From this axiom, that we must not without necessity multiply beings, he was gradually led, not only to repel the beings of reason as phantoms, but even to misunderstand the objective value of the idea of substance, and to hesitate before the distinction of mind and matter; in other words, to the last limits of sensualism. These hesitations even indicated the approaches of that scepticism which was now about to reappear, and which, in fact, nothing so generally favours as the extreme boldness of those dogmatic systems which we can neither believe nor answer.

Thus the exclusive schools issued from their ruins. They filled the fourteenth century with their rivalries. Logic, that learned gymnasium wherein the European intellect had attained its vigorous temperament, had now degenerated into an assault of sophism, a puerile and dangerous game: questions, divided and subdivided to infinity, had risen like dust beneath the feet of the contending parties. Metaphysics were lost in a barren ontology, where the formalities, the hæceites, and other capricious creations of the human understanding, assumed the



place which belonged to the living creations of God. They no longer interrogated experience, whose replies were too slowly obtainable, and too inflexible for the inclinations of belligerent opinions; they sought out other and more easily corruptible oracles in the instructions of antiquity, which were declared infallible. Then amid the almost unanimous concert of Christian doctors was celebrated the apotheosis of Aristotle. A pagan divinity does not always content itself with incense, it requires sacrifices; the immolation of all independent doctrine. And we behold the scholastic philosophy ending in the midst of these orgies, comparable to the monarch of Israel, whose youth of wisdom had astonished the world, but who profaned his latter days in the temples of strange gods.

It was at about the middle of the period, which in the foregoing pages we have endeavoured briefly to describe, at the approach of the year 1300, between the apogee of philosophy and the commencement of the decadence, in one of those solemn moments when even prosperity has in it something of melancholy through the consciousness of its approaching end; it was then that the philosophy of the Middle Ages was to have its poet. For whilst prose, above all the prose of a dead language like that of the schools, put to the proof of years, soon becomes corrupted, displaying only as a distorted image the idea buried within, poetry, is as a glorious body beneath which the thought remains incorruptible and recognisable. It is also an agile form which penetrates everywhere, and is in some sort omnipresent. Immortality and popularity are the two divine gifts of which poets have been made the dispensers. Greek philosophy had its Homer in the person of Plato; the scholastic less happily dealt with in other respects, and threatened with a more rapid decay, experienced still further the necessity of a like consolation. The coming poet had then his position marked out for him in the time; we must now mention what causes assigned it to him in space; his century being known, it remains for us to make known the intellectual position of his country.

Three inseparable things—the true, the beautiful, and the good—solicit at the same time the soul of man by the consciousness of their actual absence, and by the hope of a possible reconciliation. The desire of the good was the first pre-

occupation of the early sages, and philosophy in its origin, as its name testifies, was the work of love. But the good not being able to make itself known without being regarded as true, uncertain practice called in the aid of speculation: it was necessary to study beings, in order to determine the laws which united them. The true could not be approached without its splendour being perceived, which splendour is the beautiful, the harmony of things, reflecting itself in the conceptions of the learned, would be reproduced in their discourses. The philosophy of the early times was then, we find, moral in its direction and poetical in its form.

Such, in the bosom of the Pythagorean school, it appeared for the first time in Italy. Then the cities demanded from it laws; and later, the metaphysicians of Elis, and also Empedocles of Agrigentum, sang the mysteries of nature in the language of the gods. Then Rome was, and, as its name announced, Rome was strength, and this strength brought into action became the empire of the world. The Roman people ought then above all to have been endowed with the genius of action; yet neither was a feeling for art wanting; harmonious words were required at its tribunes, in the field, at its triumphs. The reason, then, that it greeted philosophy was because this philosophy presented itself under the auspices of Scipio and Ennius, engaging thus at the same time to serve and to please; and since that period it ceased not to take advantage of the common patronage of statesmen and poets. It visited the retreat of Cicero, accompanied Seneca into exile, died with Thræseas, dictated to Tacitus, reigned with Marcus Aurelius, and seated itself in the schools of the Jurist, who reduced all the science of things human and divine to the determination of good and evil. It had invited to its lessons Lucretius, Virgil, Horace, Ovid, and Lucan. The systems of Zeno and Epicurus, prompt in resolving themselves into moral consequences, and the traditions of Pythagoras, impressed with an indelible beauty, alone obtained the right of Roman citizenship. Christianity now appeared to fertilize anew the Italian soil. After Pantœnus, the bee of Sicily, and the head of the Alexandrian school; after Lactantius and Saint Ambrosius, the genius of the ancient Romans lived again in the sixth and seventh centuries, in the persons of two of their most noble descendants. Boethius and St.



Gregory. The first a martyr of civil courage, imparted to philosophy a language at once harmonious and consolatory; the second, an indefatigable pontiff, left behind him as monuments in the history of the human intellect, his admirable books upon the Holy Scriptures, and the system of chanting, which still bears his name. In the latter times the Italian sun ceased not to shine upon generations of philosophers, moralists, jurists, publicists, and poets, who considered it honourable to philosophize; as for example Marsilius Ficino, confounding in his neoplatonic enthusiasm science, art, and virtue. Machiavelli, whom we need merely name; Vico and Gravina, tracing the fundamental laws of society, the one with hieroglyphical symbols, the other with the same pen which was destined in later days to write the statutes of the *Accademia degli Arcadi*; Petrarch and Tasso; and if we may be permitted to quote more recent "celebrities," Manzoni and Pellico.

We may, then, recognise among the Ultramontane philosophers a double character—antique and permanent, or, so to speak, national; for the durability of habits which forms personality in individuals, constitutes also nationality among populations. From whatever cause arising, we may say that there exists an Italian philosophy which has been able to maintain in their primitive alliance, moral direction, and poetic form, the united and realized ideas of the true, the beautiful, and the good.

In the Middle Ages the Italian philosophy was neither less flourishing nor less faithful to its double character. Lefranc and Saint Anselmo inaugurated in Northern Europe the regenerated studies. Peter Lombard was borne by universal admiration from his professorial chair to the bishopric of Paris; and whilst John Italus honoured his name in the school of Constantinople, Gerard, of Cremona, established at Toledo, interrogated the science of the Arabs, and taught the Spaniards how to enrich themselves from the scientific spoils of their enemies. Bologna had been the seat of a philosophical instruction of no mean character previous to the commencement of those lessons in jurisprudence which rendered it in after days so celebrated. Logic and physics were also assiduously professed in the thirteenth century; Padua had nothing to envy in its rival; Milan numbered nearly two hundred professors of

grammar, logic, medicine, and philosophy. In short, the renown of the thinkers of the Peninsula was so great throughout all the provinces of the continent, that it served to explain the origin of the newly arisen doctrines, as well as why Arnold di Villanova, for example, should pass for the adept of a Pythagorean sect scattered through the principal cities of Apulia and Tuscany.

But the exuberant vigour of Italian philosophy more peculiarly manifested itself in the memorable conflict which now arose, and which, analogous to that of the priesthood and the empire, continued for more than two hundred years between the orthodox and hostile systems. From the year 1115, the Epicureans were sufficiently numerous in Florence to form there a powerful faction, and to provoke much ill-feeling, several quarrels, and some bloodshed; in later days materialism appeared there as the avowed doctrine of the Ghibelline. The descendants of Averroes were received at the Italian court of the Hohenstaufens at the same time as a Saracen colony was founded at Nocera, which made Rome tremble. Frederick II. rallied round him all the perverse opinions of the day, with the intention, seemingly, of establishing a rival school of Catholic instruction. This school, for a period reduced to silence after the fall of the dynasty which had protected it, recovered some strength when another emperor, in the person of Louis of Bavaria descended from the Alps to receive the crown from the hands of an anti-pope. A little later, Petrarch, when quoting in his discourses St. Paul and St. Augustine, excited a disdainful smile upon the lips of the learned men by whom he was surrounded, the adorers of Aristotle and of the Arabian commentators.

These irreligious doctrines soon sought to reduce themselves into learned pleasures, they had poets to sing their glories. The truth, however, did not remain without its defenders. Two illustrious individuals arose in this cause, Thomas Aquinas and Saint Bonaventura, who may be here justly designated as two Italian glories. Both of them profound moralists, they were both alike poetically inspired. Egidius Colonna also combatted Averroism with the same pen which traced lessons for kings, and Albertans di Brescia published three treatises on ethics in the vulgar tongue. We might quote many others also who, though highly vaunted in their day, have experienced



the hollowness of worldly applause and favour.

But of all the cities seated at the foot of the Apennines none could boast of a more happy fecundity than Florence. Distracted by intestine wars, if she travailed in pain and anguish, she yet brought forth immortal children. Without counting Lapo Fiorentino, who professed philosophy at Bologna, and Sandro di Pipozzo, author of a treatise on Political Economy, the success of which was universal, she had given birth to Brunetto Latini and Guido Cavalcanti. Brunetto, notary of the Republic, had been enabled, without failing in his patriotic functions, to render himself useful to science: he had translated into Italian the moral writings of Aristotle; he edited also, under the title of "Treasure," an encyclopedia of the learning of his time, and gave, in his *Tesoretto*, the example of a didactic poetry, deficient neither in justness of thought nor in grace of imagery and expression. Guido Cavalcanti was hailed the prince of the lyre; a song composed by him on the passion of love obtained the honour of several commentaries, to which the most highly venerated theologians of the day disdained not to put their hands. He would have been admired also as a philosopher had his orthodoxy been unimpeachable. Two citizens of this merit would have been sufficient in themselves to honour a city already famous: a third, however, was nigh at hand who was fated to cast their glory altogether into the shade.

In the year 1265, under sinister auspices and in the house of an exile, was born Dante Alighieri. Many memorable events surrounded his cradle: the crusade of Tunis; the termination of the great interregnum by the election of Rodolph of Hapsburg, the second council of Lyons, the Sicilian Vespers; the death of Ugo-lino; such were the all-absorbing topics of conversation which greeted his childish ears. As he grew in years he beheld his country divided between the rival factions of the Guelfs and Ghibelline; the first, defenders of Italian independence and municipal liberty; the second, champions of the feudal rights and the ancient sovereignty of the Papal dominion. Family tradition, as well as his own political leanings, attached him to the cause of the Guelfs, and he assumed the virile robe in combating in their ranks at Campaldino, where they triumphed. Shortly afterwards he bore a share in the

dissensions of the victorious party, when, under the stormy tribuneship of Giano della Bella in 1292, the municipal constitutions were modified, the nobles excluded from the magistracy, and the interests of the Republic remitted into the hands of the plebeians. Successively employed in various embassies, when he reappeared in his native country, the highest honours and the final perils of his life awaited him. On assuming the office of Prior or chief magistrate of Florence, he found the nobles and the plebeians returning to the fray under the new titles of Bianchi and Neri; his sympathies for the former made the latter his enemies. Whilst he was at Rome endeavouring to neutralize their influence, they summoned to Florence Charles de Valois, brother of Philip the Fair. The prince, as we know, won the day, but he dishonoured himself and the French name by pronouncing against the chiefs of the Bianchi a sentence of proscription. Dante cursed his judges, but not his country; the remembrance of his beloved fatherland accompanied him in his wanderings from city to city and beneath the sheltering roofs of his protectors, the Marquis de Lugiani, the Scaligeri of Verona, and the Signors of Polenta; ever sombre and ever finding bitter to his taste the bread of hospitality. Sometimes by force, sometimes by entreaty, by all means, in short, except dishonourable or grovelling ones, he sought to return to that cherished city, the sheepfold of his early years. And when his abortive attempts left him no other resource, if he seemed to go over to the camp of the Ghibelline, it was because he imagined he should there find that liberty in whose cause he had previously fought against them, and also because the French intervention, solicited through the imprudence of the Guelfs, threatened Italy with fresh perils. It must also be borne in mind that these titles of the rival factions had several times changed their signification; and amid these intestine brawls remained but as words of sinister import inscribed upon banners which now rallied round them only self-interests, passions, and crimes. Dante never ceased to confound under a general reprobation the excesses of both parties, and sought in a higher region the social doctrines to which his devotion belonged. For this passion of interfering in political affairs which had before precipitated him into such strange misfortunes, never abandoned him, and we read that he



was engaged on a diplomatic mission to Venice when he died at Ravenna in the year 1321.

But as it is not our intention to enter here upon a detailed account of the life of the great Italian poet, this brief summary of Dante's political career must suffice, and we now proceed to a consideration of the man as a poet, and the poet of his age; but more especially to a consideration of his *maximus opus*, the *Divina Commedia*. In the course of our remarks, however, upon this poem, we may as well here frankly state, that we shall feel called upon to differ very considerably from the opinions which have been generally entertained of it, more especially by the compatriots of the author, and though rendering a full meed of justice and praise to the many beauties, nay, sublimities of this extraordinary work, we must be permitted to point out the numerous blemishes—to use no harsher term—by which in several parts it is so grossly disfigured, blemishes though many of which may of course be traced to the influence of the barbarous and superstitious age in which he lived, and whose poet he was, several, it must be allowed, are due only to the poet himself.

That Dante was a man of extraordinary and consummate genius cannot, we think, for a moment be questioned; as a poet he stands alone in the world of poetic art, and as such escapes the common rules of criticism; nor indeed is it an easy task to pronounce judgment upon him in any fashion with perfect moderation. His defects are monstrous, and his beauties sublime. Of these defects some, as we have just said, must be attributed to the barbarism of the age in which he lived, though it is certain that others belong to himself alone. He has imitated no one, nor has any one taken him for a model; hence it follows that he can be compared to no poet either of past or present times. The modern Italians, so justly proud of their Ariosto and their Tasso, have never for an instant dreamed of putting them into competition with him: the singers of Rolando and Godfrey excite their admiration in common with that of the rest of Europe; the painter of the *Inferno* is for them the object of an enthusiasm which they feel indignant at not seeing partaken by other nations, and which it would appear is daily on the increase. They term him the greatest poet that

ever existed, and feel no hesitation in ranking him above Homer himself, seeing that Homer, as they say, sang, in a language already formed, certain events, historical and fabulous, consecrated by anterior tradition, whilst Dante created at the same time both his subject and his idiom.

In fact it cannot be denied that the plan of the *Inferno*, the *Purgatorio*, and the *Paradiso*, of which he has given the description, and of that infinite variety of graduated torments which has made the lot of the condemned, as well as of those who, according to the Roman Catholic belief, expiate certain sins before attaining the sojourn of eternal felicity, has been the complete and spontaneous creation of his own vast and fruitful imagination. The Christian religion had at that period furnished only a very limited number of uncertain, and, what is worse, abstract notions on the rewards and punishments of a future state; as to the Italian language, it was, previous to Dante's time, nothing better than a gross heterogeneous mass of various popular dialects engendered from the corruption of the Latin tongue, possessing neither lexicon nor grammar, limited until then to the expression of the needs of everyday life, and at furthest extending to those of the vulgar sentiments of gallantry and love; and as a necessary consequence, wholly deficient in purity, regularity, richness, elevation, or force. The poetical language, above all, did not yet exist. Dante called this language into being, and endowed it principally with nobility and energy of expression. Later it seemed to receive from the hands of Petrarch that sweetness and grace which have become its characteristic qualities; but even in this the lover of Laura only completed the work commenced by the lover of Beatrice, for was not that poet who had painted in such daring hues the terrible adventure of Count Ugolino, the same who employed his softest tints in depicting the touching episode of Francesca di Rimini? We may then with truth affirm that Dante has been at once the creator of a new poetical machine, and the founder of a new poetry, and that it is in this double title that he merits one of the first places, if not the very first place, among the truly inventive geniuses of the world.

(To be concluded in our next.)



## A MARRIAGE FROM PIQUE.

"Love, Hope, and Joy!

Say are ye then but phantoms bright,  
Which smile a moment on our path,  
Then vanish, mocking, from our sight?"

NEVER did a spring-tide sun shed its radiance with softer brilliancy upon a bridal party, than on the morning of May 20, 185—, when the bells of St. Mary's Church, Cheltenham, rang out a merry peal to announce that one more indissoluble knot had been tied within its walls,—a knot which the stern hand of Death alone should sever or destroy.

The atmosphere of the preceding day had been so heavily laden with gloom and chilling mists, that one of Julia Foley's bridesmaids had playfully predicted to her all sorts of ills in her matrimonial life, unless the weather should kindly change its aspect before the morrow. "You know the old saying, Julia,—'Happy is the bride on whom the sun shines;' and if the converse be true, what an awful affair it will be to enter the portals of Hymen beneath such a veil of clouds and vapour as now hang drooping around us. Really, I quite pity you!" continued she, laughing.

"How can you talk such nonsense?" replied Julia, somewhat impetuously; "for my part, I don't believe those old wives' fables; and it is all the same to me whether I am married amid storm or sunshine."

"I am glad to hear you say so, dearest Julia," observed Edmund Forde, who was seated by her side; "for a happy spirit heeds not the outward aspect of nature; and," continued he, fondly pressing her hand, "the only sunshine I care for is found in the bright glance of your own dark eyes."

A deep glow overspread Julia's countenance. Its hue might, to a cool observer, have seemed to be that of impatience or irritability, rather than symptomatic of any softer or kindlier emotion: but Mr. Forde was too deeply wrapt in the elysium of his own thoughts to see aught but what was bright and fair in his beloved Julia's countenance. Nor was his estimate of her attractions a mistaken one; for Julia Foley was one of those beings who could scarcely be beheld without awakening some degree of liking or admiration. There was an airy elegance in her form, an elasticity in her movements, a joyousness in her repartee, which, com-

bined with feminine regularity of features and an earnest desire to please, made her a welcome and admired guest in every circle.

Until a few months before her marriage no brow was so unclouded as Julia's,—no laugh rang with a clearer or more child-like melody. But on her return home, about three or four months before the eventful day of which we are going to speak, it was apparent that some change had passed over her gladsome spirit; and the waywardness of her temper provoked some harmless gossip among her youthful companions, one of whom, more intimate than the rest, ventured playfully to suggest that Julia *must* be in love, for she was become so grave and thoughtful. This remark drew forth such an indignant repartee, that no more surmises of the kind were indulged in her presence; and all conjectures of that sort were speedily baffled by her acceptance of Edmund Forde as a suitor for her hand.

This gentleman had arrived at Cheltenham just about the time of Julia's return home after a long visit to some distant friends. He speedily became her avowed admirer; and, somewhat to the surprise of her friends, the fastidious Julia favoured his addresses, and, after a short engagement, allowed him to name an early day for their marriage. Her parents were satisfied at the prudent choice she had made, as Mr. Forde was not only a man of much ability, and of high moral worth, but also possessed of sufficient wealth to ensure her ease and comfort through life. The gossips of the neighbourhood marvelled, however, that so young and lovely a girl should link her fate with one whose personal aspect was far from attractive, and whose age exceeded her own by fifteen or twenty years. One there was, who viewed with tender regret and anxiety the engagement which Julia had so hastily formed,—one, to whom heretofore her every thought had been open; but who now felt painfully sensible that her youngest sister's heart was purposely closed against her watchful eye, and her ear deaf to any word of gentle warning or advice. So after awhile, Clara Foley learned the blessed secret of a cheerful, trustful silence; and on the morning of Julia's marriage, as she bound on the bridal veil on this her only sister, so sweet a smile lighted up her countenance, that but for one silent tear



which betrayed her emotion, it might have been deemed that she remained calm and unmoved at this eventful moment of her sister's life.

As the train of handsome equipages was approaching the gate leading to St. Mary's, Julia turned to one of her bridesmaids, and said to her laughing, "What has become of all your croaking? you bird of ill-omen! Look at that glorious sun, and blush at your evil forebodings of yesterday." "Yes, it is indeed a bright and lovely morning; I only hope it may last." "What! more croaking! that is insufferable. I have a mind to banish you from my train." "It is rather late to exercise your sway over me now," replied her young friend gaily; "for here we are at these dread portals; do you not tremble at the prospect of entering them?" "A brave heart never trembles," replied Julia, as the carriage-door opened, and she accepted the hand which was destined to guide her up to the altar.

Many expressions of admiration were uttered by the crowd who were assembled round the church door, but they seemed to be either unheard or unheeded by her who had called them forth. One voice having, however, exclaimed aloud that the bride looked as happy as she was beautiful, a convulsive movement of her arm caused Mr. Foley to turn round and gaze inquiringly in his daughter's face. But Julia had regained her composure; and, to use her own expression, walked "bravely" on. During the solemn ceremony which bound her destiny with the life-long fate of another, Julia's blanched lips and pallid cheek spoke a different language from the words of love and trustfulness which she uttered with her mouth in a calm and measured tone. Once only her courage seemed to fail her. It was at the moment that her happy bridegroom was about to place the ring upon her finger; when she shrank back instinctively from this pledge of indissoluble union. It was, however, but a single instant of forgetfulness. She immediately recovered her self-possession, and, at the conclusion of the ceremony, wrote her name without any of that tremulousness which so often characterizes the signature of a bride. On her return home, she received with graceful composure the congratulations of those friends who were assembled to meet her at breakfast; but, as the time of her departure drew nigh, her flushed cheek and the unnatural brilliancy of her eye bespoke the inward conflict of her mind: and once or

twice, on observing that Clara's glance rested tenderly and anxiously upon her, she turned away with a proud look of irritation, as if unwilling that any human being should scan those thoughts which she had so sedulously endeavoured to conceal. With her mother, she had no difficulty of this sort to encounter; for, although a most fond and attached parent, she looked not below the surface of things, and felt satisfied with the conviction that her daughter had made her own choice, unswayed by parental authority, and that her partner for life was an unexceptionable one in every respect.

At length the parting moment arrived, and while Mr. Forde waited impatiently to hand his lovely bride into the travelling chariot that awaited her, Julia's stoicism failed; and bestowing on Clara a long and agonizing embrace, she burst into tears, and whispered in her sister's ear, "Oh! forgive me—love me—pray for me!" words which sounded like a knell within Clara's heart long after the sound of the chariot-wheels had died away in the distance.

And wherefore had the fascinating Julia thus hastily and unadvisedly bowed her head beneath a yoke which seemed so galling to her spirit, even before its early silken gloss was worn away? To answer this question, we must, for awhile, turn away our glance from the onward stream of time, and trace out Julia's erring course during a brief period preceding her marriage.

About seven or eight months previous to the eventful day of which we have just been treating, Julia bent her steps with a light and buoyant spirit to Woodthorpe Park, in Yorkshire, whither she went to visit her earliest and best-loved school companion, Sophy Milbanke, to whose father this ancient mansion with its extensive manor belonged. The youthful friends had not met since they were seventeen; but their correspondence had been too vigorously kept up to allow of any *refroidissement* in their attachment, and they both looked forward with equal delight to a renewal of their daily intercourse after a separation of three years—a whole century of time in the reckoning of young and enthusiastic hearts. Mr. and Mrs. Milbanke had cordially seconded their daughter's request that she might be allowed to enjoy her friend's society for three or four months; nor did Julia's parents offer any objection to the plan, as they knew that the circle in which she



would move at Woodthorpe Hall, was, in worldly *parlance*, a desirable one for their favourite daughter. So Julia left her father's home, under the care of a trusty attendant, and towards the close of one bright October evening arrived at Woodthorpe Park, where she received a kind welcome from Mr. and Mrs. Milbanke, and was greeted by Sophy with all the rapture of a sensitive and romantic girl, whose early friendship had been nurtured rather than impaired by their long separation.

No two beings could be more unlike than Julia and Sophy. The former, clever, brilliant, and light-hearted. The latter, thoughtful, timid, and reserved. Perhaps it was this very dissimilarity of character which first drew them so closely together in their childish days; for Sophy looked up to Julia as a superior being, whom she fondly admired, and on whose judgment she implicitly relied; while Julia, on the other hand, loved her friend all the better, because of the unbounded influence which she consciously exerted over her.

During the first fortnight of Julia's visit, they were nearly alone at Woodthorpe, and to one possessing a less buoyant spirit than hers, the ancient mansion, with its still domestic life, might have seemed dull and wearisome; but Julia, whose home had hitherto been fixed at one of those handsome villas which abound in the neighbourhood of Cheltenham, found fresh delight each day in the novelty of her position. She had left the varied sameness of a watering place behind her, and revelled in the freedom of a country life. Hour after hour she would wander through the long galleries at Woodthorpe, and listen to Sophy's romantic tales concerning the ancient personages by whose silent presence they were thronged: or she would roam beneath the avenues of spreading oak and majestic elm and expatiate on the charms of retirement, or mounting a spirited mare, which Sophy was too timid to ride, she would gallop over the wide expanse of swelling common, in company with Mr. Milbanke, who was quite charmed with her spirit, and actually gave up an hour's nap in the evening for the sake of listening to her merry songs and sprightly conversation. She won Mrs. Milbanke's good graces by her knowledge of many new stitches in Berlin work, by which the worthy lady's stock of amusement was increased. In short, for a little while after her arrival, Julia was the soul of the little circle at Woodthorpe, and she

was happy in the consciousness of being so. But some craving for variety was creeping into her volatile mind, when a pleasant addition to their small party appeared in Sophy's second brother, a dashing young officer, who had just obtained a few weeks' leave of absence. It had long formed one of Sophy's day dreams that her brother Charles should become deeply enamoured with Julia, and that the two beings so dear to her should be united for life. At first it seemed as if this fond fancy were likely to be realized; for Charles devoted himself assiduously to the fair stranger, and his attentions appeared to be by no means unwelcome to Julia, who smiled at his compliments, and encouraged his witty sayings by her lively repartees. On the approach of Christmas the old hall became thronged with guests; and Julia, ever fond of novelty, sought amusement among the new comers. The young soldier, accustomed to her undivided attention, was nettled at this indifference; and a few mornings after the arrival of his elder brother, she overheard Charles, in answer to some observation of Alfred's, replying in a bitter tone, "In love with her! I am no more in love with her than you are. I only amused myself with her, when there was no one else here to talk' with. She is an arrant coquette." "A coquette! Is she indeed? that is a pity, for she is a very pretty girl," was Alfred's rejoinder. Julia was stung to the quick; more especially as Alfred had already in some sort commanded her respect, and she was unwilling to be regarded by him in so contemptible a light as that of a coquette. Alfred Milbanke, both in mind and habits, offered the greatest contrast to his brother. He was rather silent; but there was a manly intelligence in his countenance, and an originality in his conversation, which won for him ready and pleased attention in society. There was, moreover, a dash of romance in his character, which gave him additional interest in the eyes of his female acquaintance, and Julia was by no means insensible to their attraction. She was so much pained by the observation which had chanced to meet her ear, that insensibly her conduct was affected by it, and she no longer appeared the gay volatile being who had called forth Charles's cutting remarks. With Alfred especially she became, unwittingly, timid and reserved, and her softened manner soon drew his attention.



Partly from curiosity, partly from that degree of interest which was awakened by her evident deference to his opinion, he began to converse more freely with his sister's friend; and gradually his attentions were devoted to her, in preference to any of the other fair ladies who formed part of the Christmas circle at Woodthorpe Park. He did not flatter or humour her, as Charles had done; but the silent homage of his eye, and the frequent reference he made to her tastes and wishes, were far more captivating to Julia than that undisguised admiration to which she had already been so long habituated, that it seemed to be almost a part of her birthright. There was no feeling of triumph awakened in Julia's heart by this apparent preference; but a deep tranquil pleasure which seemed to soften and elevate her nature, leading her to aim at a nearer resemblance to him, whom she regarded as a being far superior to any of those around her.

Days and weeks passed on. Oh! how swiftly! For when did happiness ever prove a laggard on her path? The sad and weary steps of sorrow may press slowly and heavily upon the earth, as if she considered it her home; but soft-winged happiness skims along its surface with a light and waving pinion, as if she would fondly lure us to that heaven which is her only resting-place.

It was the last day of January—cold and cheerless as a January day has a right to be in these our northern climes, and its gloom was somewhat deepened at Woodthorpe Park by the approaching separation of the joyous party which had assembled there during the social season of Christmas. Little would Julia have heeded the breaking up of this large circle, had she not been aware that Alfred was about to leave home for several weeks; and her heart sank within her, lest she should have deceived herself as to the nature of his sentiments towards her, and that no word of hope should be breathed in her ear before his departure. She had heard it hinted that his absence at this moment was a necessary one, caused by business; and a smile of mingled playfulness and mystery had been apparent among the members of his family when this subject was alluded to. What could this mean? Was it a matter in which she was especially concerned? During the greater part of this day Alfred was shut up with his father in his study, and when he appeared at dinner,

there was an unusual degree of seriousness in his aspect. As for Julia, she felt sad and perplexed; and more than once had some of the young people rallied her on account of her dulness. In the evening her *quondam* admirer, Charles, approached her with an humble request that she would favour them with one of her charming songs: "for," added he, "to-morrow we poor wretches may be moping to death on the road, and let us for pity's sake bear away with us the latest memory of your heavenly voice." "You are very complimentary," replied Julia, coldly; "but you must be so kind as to excuse me, for I have a dreadful headache, and cannot sing a note. There are other ladies here who have no such excuse, and I dare say one of them will oblige us with a song." At this moment Alfred drew near, and without being aware of his brother's unsuccessful petition, he earnestly entreated of Julia to sing Beethoven's lovely song of "Adelaide." She stammered out an excuse, and referred him, as she had already done Charles, to some other songstress of the party. "Oh! no; no one here can sing that like yourself; pray indulge me this once. Surely you will not say no. It is not in your nature to be unkind." Julia was growing each moment more confused, when Charles, who was standing by, said, with a provoking smile, "Ah! I see you will carry your point, Alfred; but that is always the way with you quiet people: besides you are of course a privileged person, so I must not complain." Alfred, looking very grave, replied, "I shall only be too happy if Miss Foley does regard me as a privileged person, and will therefore kindly grant my request." So saying, he offered his hand to the complying Julia, and leading her to the piano seated himself beside the instrument, and soon became absorbed in the sweet melody to which she gave such worthy utterance.

Charles, half offended, retreated into the adjoining apartment, with which the music-room communicated by folding-doors, and entered into animated conversation with some of his young friends, leaving his father ensconced in his easy chair by the fireside, and enjoying the music in a half unconscious state of delight. At the conclusion of the song, the old gentleman awoke up, exclaiming, "Ah! Alfred; that reminds you, I suppose, of a certain fair lady, who sings it almost as well as Miss Foley. I cannot say better,



for that would be impossible," added he, bowing politely to Julia; "but I hope that, on her next visit, she may have an opportunity of judging for herself. I should like to introduce her to Mrs. Alfred Milbanke," continued he, in a careless, good-humoured way at his son.

But the next moment his attention was drawn to Julia, whose flushed cheek had suddenly faded to a deadly pallor, and who seemed on the point of sinking from her seat, when Alfred caught her in his arms, exclaiming, "Good heavens! Is it possible? . . . I thought you knew." . . . And suddenly checking himself, he begged to support her to the sofa, and rang the bell for a glass of water. Meanwhile, Sophy had hastened to her friend's assistance; but Julia, making a violent effort to resume her composure, assured her that it was merely the heat of the room that had affected her. "It was all my fault," interrupted Alfred, in a hurried tone; "for although Miss Foley complained of a bad headache, I pressed her to sing, and the effort was too great for her; pray, Sophy, take her into a cooler room." The gentle Sophy was full of anxiety on her friend's account, but Julia, thanking her coldly for her kindness, said she was quite well, and only needed a few moments' repose and quiet. Alfred, casting on her a look of inexpressible sadness and distress, left the room.

What a night of agony and conflict followed the discovery which Julia had just made! Disappointment—rage—offended pride—all struggled for the mastery in her soul, and she arose on the following morning languid and miserable.

Alfred's conduct seemed to her the result of heartless and deliberate selfishness; and an indistinct remembrance of his words on the preceding evening convinced her that to him at least the secret of her burdened spirit was not unknown. "But," thought she to herself, and in the intensity of her purpose she uttered her resolution aloud, "never shall he have the satisfaction to know that Julia Foley is pining away for his sake. Others may value the prize with which he has trifled as an amusement for his leisure hours." So saying, Julia bathed her throbbing temples anew with cold water, and bracing her nerves to the task which lay before her, descended to the breakfast room.

Nor had Alfred Milbanke passed the night on a bed of roses; for his was a kindly spirit which shrunk from inflicting

a moment's pain upon any living being; and his mind was tortured by the suspicion that he had wounded her whose society had, during several weeks past, proved to him the source of so much enjoyment. Alfred was one of those thoughtful, imaginative men to whose happiness the society of women is almost indispensable; and who, if they be absent from the lady of their choice, seek a temporary solace in the society of some other of the gentler sex. No disloyal thought to Blanche Greville had ever crossed his mind; but while separated from her during his Christmas visit at home, he was pleased to find in his sister's friend one whose wit and accomplishments served to beguile the weary hours. Perhaps also he was insensibly swayed by a latent feeling of gratification at the gentle deference yielded to his opinions by so lovely and spirited a person. And surely this natural touch of vanity may be pardoned him . . . for he was mortal. And so far from desiring to conceal his engagement from Julia, he nothing doubted but that Sophy had long since made her acquainted with the whole matter. Indeed so fully was he possessed with this idea that, once or twice during their recent intercourse he had even been on the point of alluding to his fair *fiancée* as to a subject in which Julia would take a kindly interest; but he hesitated, faltered, and remained silent. And poor Julia! How cruelly for her own peace of mind did she misinterpret those moments of perplexity and hesitation!

Now, however, the veil had been suddenly withdrawn! and how did she meet the trial which thus unexpectedly had crossed her path?

Julia's hand rested for a moment on the handle of the door, ere she had courage to enter the breakfast-parlour; but making a desperate effort, she conquered her fears and joined the assembled party within. The brilliancy of her dark eye and the gay smiles with which her lip was wreathed, betrayed no symptom of the fevered wretchedness that dwelt within. Sophy came forward with affectionate inquiries about her health, to which she replied, in an easy, careless tone; but the deathlike coldness of her hand aroused the anxiety of her friend.—"Indeed, dear Julia, I am sure you are not quite well yet; but when I have you all to myself, I can take better care of you. By the bye, Alfred made a thousand inquiries for you this morning before he left, and desired me to say how



grieved he was not to say farewell; but a letter from a friend unexpectedly hastened his departure." Julia felt her lip quiver for a moment, but her strong will gained the ascendancy, and she made some common-place reply. Charles's eye rested on her for a moment with a slight expression of curiosity, but she gave him a scornful glance as if she would defy him to guess her secret, and seating herself near Mr. Milbanke began to entertain the old gentleman with her usual vivacity.

That day's post conveyed a letter to Cheltenham, acquainting her mother that she was growing weary of her visit and earnestly desired to return home; and after another week spent in the painful effort to sustain her character for sparkling wit and good humour, she found herself to her infinite satisfaction once more on her way home. Home! one of the sweetest words in our English language, but which too often turns to gall on the lips of those whose hearts are stirred by any one unkindly wish or evil passion.

We have already told how the dimness which had passed over Julia's bright and joyous spirit was observed by her friends, how it awakened the anxiety of her sister; and finally how, within a brief period, she pledged herself to become the wife of Edmund Forde.

But we have not spoken of the fierce conflict by which her whole being was perplexed and agitated before this fatal decision was made; how she loathed the very thought of a union with her impassioned suitor, and how sternly she conquered her reluctance, through the intensity of her desire to become a wedded wife before Alfred Milbanke had pronounced those vows which must inevitably separate them for ever. "Then," exclaimed she mentally—"then will he be persuaded that I never cared for him, when he learns that I have already given myself to another." This was the one proud thought which sustained her throughout her arduous struggles; and truly the firmness of her purpose was worthy of a better cause. But did no inward monitor warn Julia of the guilt she was about to incur by pledging herself in the sight of God and man to a service of honour and of love, which she felt herself utterly powerless to fulfil? Did no "still small voice" remind her of the deadly wrong she was preparing to inflict on him who vainly expected that

all her thoughts and affections would be consecrated to his happiness?

Strange as it may appear, no such conviction forced itself upon her mind; or if an idea of the sort ever floated across her vision it was but as a shadowy form which too quickly faded into empty air. This dulness of moral perception arose probably, in some measure, from the fact that Julia's parents, although worthy and excellent people, had overlooked many of those great principles which purify and elevate the mass of social life. In the teaching of their children they had but slightly alluded to the might and majesty of Truth, whose prerogative it is to touch the hidden springs of our most secret thoughts, words, and actions; and as for that refined sense of honour which instinctively repels the approach of evil, and which, from its tender regard to the weal of others, may be termed the very crowning grace of Charity, they altogether cast it aside as being valueless to those who have chosen a higher and better guide through life. So Julia, strong in her resolution to fulfil conscientiously all the duties of domestic life, imagined that she was sacrificing herself alone, and counted herself almost a martyr to the allowable pride of her sex; being forgetful of those wondrous links by which humanity is so closely bound together, that no one can do a wilful wrong to his own moral nature without thereby inflicting also some evil on his fellow-creatures.

The limits of our narrative will not admit of any details concerning the early period of Julia's wedded life—of her ill-concealed aversion to her husband, and of the poor compensation he received in her sedulous attention to each domestic duty. At the time of our first acquaintance with her, she had been married ten or twelve years, and her feelings towards Mr. Forde had been somewhat softened by the endearing bond of two lovely children, a son and a daughter, in whom the thoughts and affections of both parents seemed to centre with equal tenderness.

Suffering and trial had brought us to the village adjoining Mr. and Mrs. Forde's dwelling, and Julia's cordial and considerate kindness soon won our grateful regard. My first visit to Ashcombe Hall left a most pleasing impression on my mind. The unpretending elegance of its arrangements—its soft, smooth, green terraces, scented by the fragrance of a thousand bright and beautiful flowers;



its shady walks, secluded from the sights and sounds of the village—above all, the charming mistress of the demesne and her lovely children gave a living and animated beauty to the scene, which left me nothing to desire but the endurance of so much happiness. Mr. Forde was evidently a clever, intellectual man: his wife was apparently proud of his abilities, and there was none of that jarring of opinion between them which sometimes mars the happiness even of an attached couple; but it soon became perceptible that there was a mutual avoidance of each other's glance, and that when their eyes accidentally met, there was an instantaneous dropping of the lid, as if no response of sympathy or of love was either desired or looked for by either party.

The father's heart seemed bound up in his only boy; and truly the little Edmund was worthy of all the fondness which was so abundantly lavished on him, combining as he already did the piquant beauty of his mother with the more thoughtful intelligence of his other parent. The daughter was a delicate, interesting child, but far less attractive than her brother.

Our intercourse with the family at the Hall was so frequent and so unceremonious, that at length we began to regard each other in the light of friends, and on leaving the pleasant village of Ashcombe after a residence of several months, Mrs. Forde expressed her earnest desire that we should become acquainted with her family at Cheltenham, whither we were about to bend our course.

Accordingly, on our arrival there, we were cordially welcomed by her parents and only sister, who still dwelt beneath her father's roof.

A few weeks after our arrival, we learned from them that Mr. and Mrs. Forde were almost broken-hearted on account of the death of their lovely boy, who had been taken from them unexpectedly by a severe attack of measles. The father more especially, they said, was in a state bordering on distraction, and Mrs. Forde too miserable to offer him any consolation. Methought the silent agony of her grief ought to prove his best earthly solace, but the remembrance of their apparent want of sympathy with each other's feelings flashed across my mind, and I remained silent.

A little later in the year as we were gathered one winter's evening around Mrs. Foley's fireside, our attention was drawn to the sound of carriage wheels

which had suddenly stopped before the door. A few moments later, and to the surprise and the dismay of the whole party, Julia entered the room, and throwing herself into her mother's arms, cried out in a tone of impassioned anguish, "Will you receive your miserable and deserted daughter who is come, with her child, to seek an asylum under her parents' roof?" Mrs. Foley received her embraces in a state of silent bewilderment; Mr. Foley started up from his seat and exclaimed with vehemence—"Tell me, in the name of Heaven, what is the meaning of all this?" "He has abandoned me," replied Julia, her pale lip quivering with emotion. "It was not enough for me to lose my beautiful boy, but he must choose the moment of my deepest misery to slight and neglect me; yes—and to desert me for another. And *you* can tell, dear madam," continued she, addressing herself to me, "you know whether I have deserved such treatment at his hands—whether I did not at all times yield to his wishes, and submit to his authority." Julia paused not a moment for my reply, otherwise I might have found myself obliged to insinuate the possibility of a woman faithfully fulfilling every relative duty, and yet wronging her husband most grievously by withholding from him the love and sympathy which were his due. But she went on to tell how after his son's death he grew colder and more reserved, until at length she discovered that his affection had been altogether alienated by another. "And I have left him to his choice," added she, drawing herself up with an air of offended dignity—"for never, never will I lay my eyes upon him again."

Julia's wrongs were, of course, warmly resented by her parents, who insisted on a formal separation between her and Mr. Forde, and the wretched man, to avoid a public exposure, left his home and withdrew to Boulogne, that favourite refuge of English spendthrifts and outcasts. As for Julia, she and her little daughter found a kind welcome beneath her paternal roof, and her days wore on in outward tranquillity, although the fits of abstraction to which she was subject and her oftentimes swollen eyes betrayed the misery which dwelt within. During this time, a day rarely passed without our meeting her, for both our dwellings lay within the precincts of the charming grounds of Pittville, and she seemed tenaciously to cling to our society, although



ever avoiding the subject which so painfully engrossed her mind.

I was sitting at an open window one lovely April morning, enjoying the life which seemed to be bursting in such fragrant beauty around me, when Julia appeared in sight, and hastened towards the house with a quick and hurried step. On seating herself by my side, she drew out of her reticule a letter which she placed in my hands, saying, "Read that." Its contents were as follows:—

"Dearest Julia,  
"If you wish to smooth the dying moments of a most miserable man, who deeply feels how he has wronged you, come and speak a word of pity and forgiveness to your penitent and most wretched husband,

"EDMUND FORDE.

"Do not, I beseech you, refuse this my last request. I am here alone among strangers, and the physician says I cannot live a fortnight longer. Oh! let me hear you bless me before I die."

"Of course you mean to go?" were my first words to Julia, after reading the letter. "Certainly, without a day's delay," she replied; "but will you give me one more proof of your friendship—will you accompany me? Clara cannot leave home, and I dread going alone—nor do I like taking a servant with me," added she after a moment's hesitation. "Yes, you are quite right in this decision," I replied; "and most gladly, dear Julia, will I be your companion: but on one condition—that Mr. Forde shall not see me unless he should wish to do so." "His wishes shall be consulted in everything," answered Julia, while a falling tear attested the softened feeling of her heart.

The next morning found us on our way to Boulogne. A mournful journey! Julia was evidently deeply moved by her unhappy husband's position; and silent sympathy must, I knew, be the most grateful to her during those hours of painful anxiety. After a brief but boisterous passage, we landed at Boulogne, and hastening to Mr. Forde's lodgings were ushered into the drawing room by a Frenchwoman, who pointing to a wide folding door, exclaimed in a loud, coarse voice, "*Voilà l'appartement de Monsieur,*" and then withdrew.

Poor Julia trembled so violently that she would have sunk to the ground had I not supported her as she approached her

husband's room. On reaching the door I attempted to retire, but seizing my hand with an almost convulsive grasp, she besought me, as I valued her love, not to desert her at that trying moment. "You must excuse me," I replied; "this is too sacred an interview for me to intrude on Mr. Forde, especially in his weak state of health." "Well, you must promise me to stay at the door. Only promise me this," continued she in her peculiarly impassioned accent, "and I will go in at once." "Yes, yes, I promise not to stir until you tell me to do so." So saying, I turned the handle of the door, wishing speedily to terminate the suspense of those few fearful instants, and one moment later, the pale and trembling Julia was locked in her dying husband's arms. He wept like a child; but his powers of speech were evidently failing. I heard him say in broken accents,—  
"Thank God! you are come . . . only say you forgive me before I die. . . . I have grievously sinned . . ." continued he in almost inarticulate accents. Then, as if a sudden remembrance came across him, he took a letter from under his pillow and giving it to Julia, whispered,—  
"Read it when I am gone." So saying, he sank back exhausted on his pillow. Julia tore open the letter, and after a hasty perusal of it, burst into an agony of tears and cried out—  
"Yes, yes, my own dear husband, it is I who have been the guilty one. But oh! if you are spared to me, how truly, how fondly will I love you!"

The dying man was startled from his lethargy by her passionate address—  
"What are you saying, dearest?" inquired he. "That it was all *my* fault—my fault alone. It is I who have sinned. Oh! say that you pardon me, Edmund—that you love me still!" "Pardon you, my dearest wife! Oh! how truly do I pardon you and love you! even as through infinite mercy, pardon and love have been extended to me!" continued he, clasping his hands together with an upward look of the lowliest reverence and love. His next, his last glance was one of tenderness at his wife. A few minutes later, Edmund Forde had ceased to breathe.

Vainly would I endeavour to describe the self-accusing agony of his unhappy widow, who clung with tenacious tenderness to the remains of him whom in life she had regarded with such cold indifference.

As soon as the last duties of earthly love had been duly rendered to him, we



returned to England; and while driving rapidly along together, after a long interval of silence she drew forth from her bosom a letter which seemed to have been watered by her tears, and placing it in my hands, said, "You must read that, dear friend, and learn how unworthy I have been, and how deeply aggrieved was my poor Edmund. Oh!" continued she, "if ever you hear him blamed, say that I was the guilty one; and do not allow any one in your presence to lift the finger of scorn against him, who was more sinned against than sinning."

It was in truth a touching letter, and has deeply imprinted itself on my memory. It ran as follows:—

"My own beloved Wife,

"My strength is failing so fast that I doubt whether it may be allowed me to see you, even for a moment, before I die. So I wish to write you a few lines—not of self-defence—for I have sinned, grievously sinned, against you, and against my God—but rather, humbly to implore your pardon, and also to explain some things which I never dared to allude to when we were together.

"Julia! you are too amiable, too pure a being, ever to have wronged me intentionally, in thought, word, or deed; and I do not even suspect you of any deliberate deception; but you married me while your heart was given to another. From thence has sprung all my misery—my guilt. You know not how fondly, how madly, I loved you when first you became my wife and I idly dreamt that my affection was returned. Oh! how terrible was the first moment of awaking from that blissful dream! Too soon I perceived your coldness, your aversion; and in one most miserable hour, a hint was given me that the heart which I found frozen and reserved had once glowed for another. I was too proud to reproach you, but my concentrated disappointment only became the more withering and intense. Our darling boy became

a link of kindness, if not of love between us. His death left me more desolate, more lonely than ever. It seemed to me then as if a cruel fate had rent asunder our frail, our only tie. The heart thus forlorn—thus rebellious—(for I forgot the Hand which had smitten me) yielded to the first temptation that presented itself. You know the sequel. Oh! if you had but loved me! or, not loving me, if you had refused to link your fate with mine! . . . . But no—I recall the murmur . . . . I alone am guilty—you never meant to injure me. My strength fails . . . . I can write no more . . . . and yet how much have I to say! Oh! that I may see you, even for a single moment, before I die, to hear you say that you forgive your guilty—most guilty—but penitent and affectionate husband,

"E. F.

"If I have said one word that can wound your feelings, oh, pardon me, for it is unintentional; and at this solemn moment when life is ebbing fast away, my most earnest prayers are for your happiness, my own injured wife. And may I not (unworthy as I am) bless my child, my only child, now? Oh! let her not be taught to despise her father."

This letter led, as it may be supposed, to the unfolding of Julia's early history, which was related by her with many tears and self-upbraidings.

Very shortly after her bereavement, she retired with her daughter to a quiet village at some little distance from Cheltenham, where she still resides in peaceful seclusion, dividing her time between the education of her child and those offices of love which a female hand can best render to the poor and desolate.

When last I visited her, the calm serenity of her countenance gave a new aspect of beauty to her still lovely face, and on watching her daily course of tranquil duty and of unobtrusive activity, I could scarcely realize to myself that this was the once proud and brilliant Julia Foley.



## PRACTICAL ILLUSTRATIONS OF POPULAR FALLACIES.

## No. 6.—“MARRIAGE IS A LOTTERY.”

IF this saying be true, it ought not to be so. “Marriage a lottery!” the holiest bond of life a thing of Fortune’s wheel, with blanks and prizes; and the blanks counting by thousands, the prizes by units! Oh, fortunate bachelors! if you only knew your own good fortune. Oh, happy old maids! if you would but be content with single blessedness. But, surely, this proverb is a lie—a something in which the “wisdom of our ancestors” must have been mistaken. Let us dive a little deeper into their sayings, and try if they will not throw a ray of light upon this gloomy prospect. Ay, here we have it; here is something like wisdom. “Happy is the wooing that is not long a doing.” Here is a ray of comfort, at all events; it teaches us the way to draw the prizes and avoid the blanks: we will not be long “a doing.” But stay; what is this that glares upon us in the very next line?—that makes our flesh creep, “our seated heart knock at our ribs,” and, though we had “bent up each corporeal agent to this terrible feat,” makes us start back from our resolve. We read and are appalled: “Marry in haste, and repent at leisure.” Out, mocking fiends! ye cannot both be true. And is the “wisdom of our ancestors” no guide to us in this important matter? Were their sage brains quite bewildered, addled, confused? Could they give us nothing but contradictions? Was it, indeed, a lottery? We remember a grave modern divine, who, when lecturing at a Mechanics’ Institute, laid it down that the first two things we were to do when we entered on that holy state, were to insure our life and make our will: a pretty strong symptom that he felt marriage to be a very fatal kind of lottery. Such a prologue to the happiness of the married state very nearly made us forswear it altogether. But we determined to seek further, to take other, and, if possible, better advice. Shakspeare is at our elbow: we turn to him—the great prophet-poet, the best interpreter of humanity—for guidance and instruction. Our paper-knife is thrust between the pages for our first chance in the *sortes Shaksperianæ*; and, lo! it is written—“Your marriage comes by destiny.” What, for ever harping on this string! Destiny,

chance! We are no better off than we were before. But, then, we observe these words are put in the mouth of a fool—a bitter, gibing fool, who has no reverence for the holy state of matrimony, but seems to think a fear must attach to it because men will not be contented “with being what they are.” We will not trust to the fool. And these words are found in a play with the title *All’s Well that Ends Well*; and the end is the triumph of love and the recognition of marriage. There is life in it yet. Now for our second venture. Behold:—

“Ah, me! for aught that ever I could read,  
Could ever hear by tale or history,  
The course of true love never did run smooth;  
But either it was different in blood;  
Or else misgrated, in respect of years;  
Or else it stood upon the choice of friends;  
Or, if there were a sympathy in choice,  
War, death, or sickness did lay siege to it;  
Making it momentary as a sound,  
Swift as a shadow, short as any dream,  
Brief as the lightning in the collied night,  
That, in a spleen, unfolds both heaven and  
earth,  
And ere a man hath power to say—Behold!  
The jaws of darkness do devour it up:  
So quick bright things come to confusion.”

Ah, me! still full of impediments, uncertainties! “The course of true love never did run smooth.” Not smooth, perhaps, but overcoming obstacles. “True love” does not easily yield either to “difference in blood,” or difference in years; nor stands it much upon the “choice of friends;” nor “war” nor “sickness” stays its course, unless the third grim tyrant, “death,” steals it away with the last ebbing pulse of life. False, simulated love may be “momentary,” “swift as a shadow, short as any dream;” but not so with those who truly love. Is this really “an edict in destiny”? Are we ever to meet with nothing but fate, chance, destiny, when we seek for love? Once more, and for the last time, let us try the mystic page. What have we here?—

“In love, the heavens themselves do guide the  
state;  
Money buys lands, and wives are sold by  
fate.”

Again, we are mocked with destiny and fate. But here, at any rate, the heavens take part with the true lovers, to the



discomfiture of mercenary fathers and scheming mothers. Sweet Anne Page is rescued from her "father's choice," the foolish Master Slender; and from her mother's woman's fancy, the foreign Dr. Caius, to be won and won by her own true choice, the Master Fenton. And thus she did

"evitate and shun

A thou-and irreligious, cursed hours,  
Which forced marriage would have brought  
on her."

This, our last chance in the mystic volume, seems to throw a glimmer of light on the subject—to give us, as it were, the key to the true explanation of these oracular sentences. For, while we are told that the heavens take an interest in love, and where love is, "do guide the state," we have put, in opposition to this heavenly care, fate, chance, destiny, which operate when "wives are sold,"—when we make merchandise of our affections, and purchase a wife with money, as "money buys lands." Then, indeed, "marriage is a lottery;" it can no longer be said to be "made in heaven;" the Mammon spirit of earthiness is upon it. It is our own Mammon-worship that sets the fickle wheel of Fortune rolling—our own selfish feelings which desecrate the name of love, and turn us over to the dominion of chance. It is the sensual fool who first tells us "marriage comes by destiny." The chief impediments to the "course of true love" are differences in rank and station, the interference of friends, ambition, all springing from the intensely selfish spirit of humanity; and then, most potent of all, comes the money-craving appetite, which sacrifices every true feeling to its own absorbing meanness. And thus by our own follies and infirmities we make "a lottery" of that which should be our "bed of smiling peace."

It were a curious speculation to trace the habits and customs which have, from the earliest ages, and in all communities, helped to fasten upon us those sordid feelings which make marriage something like a gambling transaction. In all barbarous nations, the father of a girl conceived he had a right to some compensation from the husband for the loss of her services, and as a remuneration for the trouble and expense of bringing her up. In the early history of all nations in their uncivilized state, the custom prevails: the woman is sold for a price. Among the

Hebrews and the Arabs the price paid to the father was sometimes very considerable. An ordinary price was five or six camels, and if the bride was very beautiful, or highly connected (rank and station had their influence even in the earliest ages), then fifty sheep and a mare or foal were added. At the siege of Troy an accomplished lady was valued at four oxen. And when Danaus found he could not get his daughters married, he advertised that he was ready to receive suitors for them without expecting any presents—that is, that he was ready to get rid of them at any price, or at no price. Among the savage tribes of our own days the custom still prevails. The red man of America still bargains for his wife, and the price varies from four horses down to a bottle of brandy. The Russians do not mince the matter as more civilized nations do, but when a marriage is proposed, the lover, accompanied by a friend, goes to the home of the bride, and says to the mother—"Show us your merchandise, we have got money." The ancient Assyrians deserve some credit for the custom they introduced: every year they put all their beauties up to auction, and the prices that were given for these were applied by a way of portion to those who were not beautiful. Thus all, of both sorts, got married; the one for their beauty, the others for the money which beauty not their own had gained for them. They made sensuality give a dowry to avarice; but still marriage was a lottery.

Let us come down to more modern times, and I fear we shall see but little improvement taking place. In the days of feudalism, the lords of the creation seemed to have tyrannized pretty severely over the affections of woman, and, as far as she was concerned, to have determined that marriage should be even worse than a lottery. In the feudal kingdom of Jerusalem—which was founded by the pious and chivalric knights, the Crusaders, who started upon their warlike pilgrimage to relieve the Holy Land from the oppressions of the infidels—a law prevailed that the lord of the manor might summon any female vassal to accept one out of three suitors whom he should propose for her husband. No respect was paid to the maiden's coyness or to the widow's affliction; neither aversion to the proffered candidates nor love to one more favoured was allowed as a legitimate excuse. One, and only one, plea could come from the fair one's mouth who was



resolute to hold her state in single blessedness; it was, that she was past sixty years of age. "After this unwelcome confession," argues a grave and learned lawyer of those days, "the lord could not decently press her into matrimony against her consent." The law of England was not exactly similar to this, although sufficiently barbarous to deserve the execration of all who respect the privileges of woman. It was a lucrative mode of extortion, even down to so far as the days of Charles I., both with the crown and the inferior nobility, to sell their wards in marriage. This most barbarous custom gave to the lord of the manor the right of tendering a husband to his female wards, while under age, whom they could not reject without forfeiting the value of the marriage; that is, without forfeiting as much as any one chose to offer the guardian for such an alliance. And the larger the property of the ward, the larger was the value of the marriage. Thus, our fair readers will perceive that in those days of chivalry and honour, of knightly feeling, and romantic generosity; when lances were set in the rest to uphold the beauty of an eyebrow or maintain the perfection of an ankle; when the Queen of Love and Beauty presided over the tournament held in honour of the ladies; in those chivalric times, they were bought and sold like cattle, and men made blanks and prizes of them in the lottery of life.

In the first stages of savage life, men regularly bought their wives from their parents. In the next stage, men paid just the same, but the father did not receive the money; it was applied to increase the dowry of the bride. Then, in our law, if the bride were converted into a widow, she became entitled to one-third of her husband's lands in right of her dower; but the masculine intelligence of modern legislation has found out that this was inconvenient, and has assisted the poor woman with facilities to get rid of her right. Now, in a more advanced stage of civilization, the husband no longer pays money for his bride; but the bargaining spirit is still preserved, and the wife pays money for the husband. Paley looks upon this alteration with great satisfaction: and, as a masculine moralist, commends it as having "proved of no small advantage to the female sex; for their importance in point of fortune, procures for them, in modern times, that assiduity and respect which are always

wanted to compensate for the inferiority of their strength, but which their personal attractions would not always secure." Still, with all the changes of customs, the Mammon-worship goes on; the lottery-wheel is ever in request, and yet we profess to feel astonishment when "marriage vows are false as dicers' oaths."

In this bargaining world, the "father's choice" is not always agreeable to the daughter's affections; where he sees nothing but the wealth, she sees the faults which the wealth hides—

"This is my father's choice.  
Oh, what a world of vile, ill-favoured faults  
Looks handsome in three hundred pounds a  
year."

But the "potent piece of imbecility," Master Slender, who owns the three hundred a-year, is not moved towards the lady by her virtues or her beauty: he finds himself drawn to her solely by the "seven hundred pounds of monies, and gold and silver," which her grandsire had left her, and the consideration that her father can give her as much more. Is it any wonder that "marriage is a lottery" when it is contracted after this fashion—when the first "motion" of it is propounded on such considerations? The Welsh Parson and the Gloucestershire Justice lay their heads together.

*Evans:* It were a goot notion if we leave our pribbles and our prabbles, and desire a marriage between Master Abraham and Mistress Anne Page.

*Shallow:* Did her grandsire leave her seven hundred pounds?

*Evans:* Ay, and her father is to make her a petter penny.

*Shallow:* I know the young gentlewoman; she has good gifts.

*Evans:* Seven hundred pounds, and possibilities, is goot gifts.

And Master Abraham Slender, whose only observation of the damsel had been that she had "brown hair, and speaks small like a woman," when asked if he can "affection the woman;" if he can carry his "good-will to the maid;" "if he can love her;" is only able to hope that he will "do as it shall become one that would do reason." But when he is asked if he will, "upon good dowry, marry her," he wakes up a little. "I will do a greater thing than that, upon your request, cousin, in any reason." And then, being further pressed if he "can love the maid," he arrives at this



wise conclusion: "I will marry her, sir, at your request; but, if there be no great love at the beginning, yet Heaven may decrease it upon better acquaintance, when we are married, and have more occasion to know one another. I hope, upon familiarity, will grow more contempt; but, if you say 'Marry her,' I will marry her; that I am freely dissolved, and dissolutely." And a dissolute affair would such a marriage have been. The only topics that he can find for her amusement, when an interview is purposely afforded, is how he "bruised his shin the other day with playing at sword and dagger with a master of fence," and his delight in the sport of bear-baiting. Just as some modern youth, of similar taste, would describe a boxing bout with one of "the fancy," and enlarge upon the merits of his horses and dogs, in a sort of canine conversation, for the edification of the lady he would wish to wed. And when he has arrived at the critical period when the question must be put, he has nothing to say for himself. The uncle, indeed, suggests for him what seems to the uncle to be his greatest recommendation, "he will make you a hundred and fifty pounds jointure." But the would-be bridegroom himself hems, and stammers, and refers to his uncle; until, fairly driven into a corner by Anne's blunt question of "What would you with me?" he has nothing left for it but to blunder out, "Truly, for my own part, I would little or nothing with you: your father and my uncle have made motions. If it be my luck, so; if not, happy man be his dole! They can tell you how things go better than I can. You may ask your father; here he comes." When such is the lover, we cannot wonder that it was not his luck to win the lady, but had tricks played with him, and was fobbed off with "a great lubberly postboy," when he thought he had run away with "sweet Anne Page."

In real life, the lady is not always so fortunate as to escape. We have known daughters sacrificed by mercenary fathers; gentle, affectionate, accomplished women,

tied by the Mammon bond to a churl without one idea in common with her, whose whole soul was in his kennel and his stable, but who found favour in the father's eyes by the length of his purse. Verily they had drawn blanks in the lottery of marriage. They were mated, not matched: joined together "as they join wainscot;" and most probably some of them will prove "a shrunk panel, and, like green timber, warp, warp." But thus it ever will be as long as we suffer ourselves to be actuated by the Mammon spirit—the mere sensual and selfish feeling which prefers the gratification of the eye and the pocket to that of the judgment and the affections. Our old English satirist, Donne, says—

"Whoever loves, if he do not propose  
The right true end of love, he's one that goes  
To sea for nothing but to make him sick."

And that "right true end of love" has been trampled on and despised from the earliest ages down to the present time, until we in vain seek for its spirit in the heavens above, but are driven down to the gnomes and elves that preside over mines and metals—fit gods to regulate the lottery to which we have sold ourselves. We wilfully embark on a troubled sea, almost with the aim the poet describes. Milton makes Adam reproach Eve with the "innumerable disturbances on earth through female snares;" but he makes him forget that man is not the only sufferer by such disturbances on earth; that he has himself helped to create and perpetuate those causes by which we have made "marriage a lottery;" by which we

"Never shall find out fit mate, but such  
As some misfortune brings him, or mistake;  
Or whom he wishes most shall seldom gain  
Through her perverseness, but shall see her gain'd  
By a far worse; or, if she love, withheld  
By parents; or his happiest choice too late  
Shall meet, already link'd and wedlock bound  
To a fell adversary, his hate or shame;  
Which infinite calamity shall cause  
To human life, and household peace confound!"



## THE MAGIC OF NATURE.

WHAT magic is like that of nature, which effects the most important changes, oft-times instantaneously? We see these wonderful changes, but cannot detect their progress. The wings of the butterfly emerging from its chrysalis state expand so quickly that the eye can scarcely watch them as they are unfurled, and acquire five times the length which they had at the first instant. Who can perceive the progress by which the faint spots, so pale and indistinct, become in a moment bright and clear; and the winged insect, set free from its prison, transformed at once into an object of surpassing beauty? The growth of animals and vegetables, however rapid, cannot be followed by the eye.

Some plants grow at a rate that is quite astonishing: the *Cobea scandens* is said to grow seven inches in the day; but growth far more rapid can be referred to; in the *Agave vivipara* of Linnæus, it is truly marvellous. There was a specimen of this plant in the Royal Gardens of Hampton Court, and another in Kew Gardens. In the summer of 1844, on the same day, each of these plants threw up a flowering stem which resembled a gigantic head of asparagus, and grew at first two feet in twenty-four hours; in two months these stalks had attained the height of thirty-six feet each. The size which some plants acquire is enormous. The fleshy leaves of the *Agave Mexico* average twelve pounds weight. Cactuses have been known to reach a most prodigious size: the weight of one specimen was seven hundred and thirteen pounds; another of them was sent over for Kew Gardens in the year 1844: it had met with some injury, unfortunately, on the passage, and by degrees it decayed, and was lost. When it arrived it weighed one ton. But the talipot tree of Ceylon exceeds all others in the production of its fruits and the size of its leaves; its height exceeds a hundred feet; the immense leaves measure each in breadth thirty feet; a single leaf can protect fifteen or twenty men from rain; it folds up like a fan, and is cut for use into triangular pieces, which are used by the Cingalese soldiers as parasols by day, and form their tents by night. The flowers of the *Rafflesia*, a parasite plant found in Sumatra, is an example of the size to which flowers can attain: it measures

ten feet in circumference, and three feet two inches in diameter; when it was cut it weighed fifteen pounds; the nectarium was sufficiently deep to contain four quarts of water. The nutriment yielded by the air and earth for these large plants must be very great.

The age of some trees is quite as astonishing as their extraordinary growth; some have lived from eight hundred to a thousand years. Evelyn, of sylvan memory, mentions one proved to be two thousand eight hundred years old, from the lines of its diameter. The durability of some species of plants, and the great fecundity of many, point to that provision which has been made for the continuation of the various tribes of vegetation. It has been calculated that the elm produces one thousand five hundred and eighty-four millions of seeds.

The mechanical force inherent in plants must be very great, by which the fluids are impelled that support vegetable life; for the most lofty of our forest trees are sustained by the constant supply of sap imbibed from the earth, which must be driven up, as if it were a single column, to the top of the tree. It has been calculated that if the tree were thirty feet high, the pressure must be fifteen pounds upon every square inch in the section of the vessels of the bottom, in order merely to support the sap. The inherent propelling force which still makes up for the waste occasioned by the evaporation of the leaves, is, indeed, an example of the most wonderful and beautiful contrivance. Hales tested the forces by which the stems and branches of trees draw up the fluid from below and propel it forward: he found, by experiment on a vine in the bleeding season, that it could propel its sap, in a glass tube, twenty-one feet above the stump of a branch which had been lopped off. The force by which this is effected is evidently regulated by its being accurately proportioned to the force of gravity. An adjustment so necessary for the existence of the plant plainly indicates that it was devised by Infinite Wisdom, and the tender care which is manifestly over all the works of the creation. That the force of gravity, and that inherent in the plant, adapt themselves to peculiar circumstances, is very beautifully exemplified in the position of flowers,—in some, the heads are erect; in others, they



droop with the heads downwards. Linnæus tells us of the drooping flowers, that their pistils being longer than the stamens, it is necessary that they should be in this position, that the farina may fall from the anthers, which are at the end of the stamens, on the point of the pistil, which is necessary for the fecundity of the plant. By the most delicate mechanism many flowers change their position at the proper time for the pollen to fertilize the flower. So wonderfully have the minutest contrivances been adjusted to ensure the preservation of every species,—so admirably adapted is the inherent force to that of gravity,—that he must be utterly insensible to the astonishing accuracy of the arrangements who can ascribe to chance what bespeaks the skill and forethought of a Supreme Intelligence! Much of the economy of vegetable life might be referred to, which depends on its adaptation to the force of gravity; the slightest attention to the relations of natural objects will show how inexhaustible such a subject would be. Those who study nature perceive the happy adaptation of means to ends visible throughout the whole economy; they observe with admiration the co-operation subsisting between the animal and vegetable kingdoms; these organized parts of nature subserving to the benefit of each other, actively keeping up that balance in the atmosphere essential to both. The study of nature is, indeed, in all its various aspects, the most sublime of all studies, leading, as it does, to the contemplation of the Divine attributes. The volume of nature, with the name of the Divine Author on every page, is open to all; it is thus happily adverted to by Lord Bacon: "It is written," says that great man, "in the only language which has gone forth to the ends of the world unaffected by the confusion of Babel."

The variety and the beauty of plants is sure to attract the admiration of man; and when he sees in them their utility to himself, his interest in them is naturally increased; not only do their exquisite forms, colours, and fragrance delight the senses, but they are given us for food and medicine, and, in many instances, for clothing. We see the same structure in vegetable as in animal life—they are upheld by the same influences. Plants have not only similar functions to those which are employed for the support of animated creatures, but their growth and succession is in like manner regulated by fixed

laws; they have their allotted time to spring from seed, for growth, for maturity, and decay; their days, like ours, are numbered: something, as we find among ourselves, may retard or accelerate the time, but the exceptions to the rule make us more observant of its wonted regularity. The functions with which vegetables are endowed approximate closely to those of the animated part of the creation—they have their vessels to carry on the circulation; they breathe, they take in nourishment; they seem, too, to take that repose to which night invites all living creatures; when the shades of evening come on, flowers of various kinds hang their heads, and their leaflets droop and close together until the morning light revives them, and they expand as if exulting in the day. Like animated beings, the vegetable tribe is liable to a variety of diseases, some of them closely resembling those from which we suffer; among them may be named the wasting away, or consumption, and a species of dropsy; they are affected by some of the poisons which are fatal to mankind; poppies impart a substance like opium to the soil, which has a visibly injurious effect on the plants in their neighbourhood. It is stated, that if arsenic be introduced into any portion of the sap-wood, it would give such a poisonous character to the fluid, that all the buds and branches on the line above it will be killed, the others remaining unaffected. An experiment on the sensitive plant, by pouring a drop or two of chloroform on it, showed that it was liable, like us, to that powerful influence which it imparts—in a moment the follicles closed successively pair by pair, and in this state the plant remained for some time; when the leaves again opened, they were not affected by the touch for a long time. Like the animal tribes, the vegetable has its native habitation, and is, like them, often opposed to others which partake of the same nature as itself. As some of the rapacious animals have driven other creatures from the regions which they inhabit, some plants are known to usurp the place where they grow, no other vegetation being found in their immediate neighbourhood: the Manchineel tree is an example of this. The Caraquata, a well-known parasite in the West Indies, may well be called a plant of prey, for it seizes on whatever tree happens to be near it, and, clinging to it, oppresses it with its luxuriant foliage till it perishes for lack of



the nourishment of which the intruder has robbed it.

Even something analogous to instinct seems to have an impulsive influence over plants: the first sign of life in the germinating seed is to seek the nutriment necessary for the existence of the plant: the radicle, bursting through its integuments, immediately directs its extremity into the soil; the evolution of the cotyledon next takes place, from which the first leaves emerge and expand to the air; the two elements on which it depends being the objects of its first impulse. Some plants which require a great deal of light turn to the sun to catch all his rays; others, to which rain would be injurious, have the power of folding up their petals to defend the more delicate parts of the blossom: the little pimpernel, with its pretty scarlet flowers, may be instanced as one of the plants for which the precaution is necessary—it indicates with so much exactitude when rain is about to fall, that it has been called the labourer's weather-glass. The regularity with which a number of plants close and open at different times of the day, suggested the idea of a floral clock; the parterre where they were arranged had only to be visited for accurate information as to the hour. The shoots of the cucumber, and other plants to which water is essential, turn spontaneously to where it is found. There is a remarkable contrivance by which the wants of those plants which require a greater stimulant than the air and soil afford is supplied; such plants have been aptly styled the rapacious part of vegetation, from their imbibing nutriment from animal matter. Among these, the plant called Venus Fly-trap may be mentioned; it is thus described:—"Its leaves are terminated by two lobes margined with bristles; they are grouped in a triangle from the ridge of each lobe, so that an insect crawling over the leaf is sure to encounter a bristle, when, by a beautiful provision of nature, the shock is communicated to the whole fabric, and the leaf immediately folds together, remaining closed until the insect is absorbed." The pitcher plant is another remarkable example of these carnivorous plants: a hollow vessel supported by a tendril may be seen; it is in the form of a pitcher, with a membranous lid, which is always raised when the plant becomes to a certain degree developed. In the bottom of the pitcher there is a liquid, supplied from a glandular part; this entraps and secures

the insects which are necessary for the nourishment of the plant.

What a beautiful contrivance we see for the support of various weakly plants! Some, as the pea, put out their tendrils and grasp whatever may be near them that can give support. The shoots of the honeysuckle, when too long and weak, curl spirally, which enables it to hold firmly to anything in the way, or adds so much to its strength as to give it power to stand without help; or when two or more shoots meet, from twining together, they form one strong support, sustaining each other. The claspers of the briony shoot forward, but should they meet with nothing to grasp after completing a spiral of three turns, they take another direction. We all know how the ivy makes its way up walls and trees by means of the claspers by which it clings. The provision made by nature to defend the cedar of Lebanon from the heavy snows which fall upon the mountain, is among the convincing proofs of a protecting Providence with which the vegetable creation abounds. The branches of the tree, which is of great magnitude, shoot out horizontally at equal distances, in rows from the base to the top of the tree; the branches would inevitably be crushed by the weight of the snow, were it not that, when winter is setting in, and all through the severe season, they change their position, and, becoming erect, embrace the body of the tree, and thus prevent the snows from resting on them.

The spontaneous motions of some plants appear like magic. If the base of a stamen of the barberry blossom be touched with the point of a pin, the filaments instantly start round the style. A curious New Holland plant, introduced into some of our greenhouses, has a tall column rising from the centre of its flower, consisting of the stamens and style united, which is usually seen hanging down over one side of the flower; but when touched ever so lightly, it starts up with a jerk, and rapidly swings over to the other side. We all know how much alive the sensitive plant is to the slightest touch—how rapidly the leaflets shrink and close if but one of them is touched. This power, which is seen in the formation and the functions of the vegetable world, must be acknowledged as the source from which we, too, have been endowed with all that fits us for the condition in which we are placed. The provision which is made for the welfare of organized life bespeaks a



pre-eminently good and gracious Creator; the humblest weed, equally with the noblest tree, proves the tender care which is over all the works by which we are surrounded. We may remember how Mungo Park was revived by such considerations under the most trying circumstances: he was stripped and robbed of all he possessed by banditti on one of his journeys in the interior of Africa. He thus describes his situation and feelings:—"In this forlorn and almost helpless condition, when the robbers had left me, I sat for some time looking around me with amazement and terror: whichever way I turned, nothing appeared but danger and difficulty; I found myself in the midst of a vast wilderness, in the depth of the rainy season, naked and alone, surrounded by savage animals, and men still more savage. I was five hundred miles from an European settlement. All these circumstances crowded at once upon my recollection, and I confess that my spirits began to fail me; I considered my fate as certain, and that I had no alternative but to lie down and perish. The influence of religion aided and supported me. I reflected that no human prudence or foresight could possibly have averted my present sufferings; I was indeed a stranger in a strange land. At this moment, painful as my reflections were, the extraordinary beauty of a small moss irresistibly caught my eye; and though the whole plant was not larger than the top of one of my fingers, I could not contemplate the delicate conformation of its roots, leaves, and fruit, without admiration. Can that Being, thought I, who planted, watered, and brought to perfection, in this obscure part of the world, a thing which appears of so small importance, look with unconcern upon the situation and sufferings of creatures formed after His own image? Surely not! Reflections like these would not allow me to despair; I started up, and, disregarding both hunger and fatigue, travelled forwards, assured that relief was at hand, and I was not mistaken."

The traces of a careful Hand are perceptible in plants from their earliest development: the young leaves, while still in bud, are folded together in such a manner as to occupy the least possible space, and in the various tribes of plants this is done in the manner most suitable to each. The magical effect produced on them by light is observed when they are unfolding; in those situations where there is suffi-

cient sunshine, the shade of green natural to each variety soon colours the leaves; but where there is a deficiency of light, as in gloomy weather, they will remain for several days of the same hue which they had before they expanded. It sometimes happens, in America, that the atmosphere is obscured by clouds and rain for days, and that during this time the buds of entire forests expand into leaves, which retain a pallid hue until the sun appears, when, within the space of six hours of bright sunshine, the colour changes to a beautiful green. It is mentioned by a traveller, that "in a forest on which the sun had not shone for twenty days, the leaves during that time were expanded to their full size, but were almost white; one forenoon the sun shone out in full brightness, and the colour of the forest absolutely changed so fast that we could perceive its progress; by the end of the afternoon the whole of this extensive forest, many miles in length, presented its usual dress." When a plant sends forth a single shoot, it will always advance towards the light. A potato which began to grow in a cellar, sent up a shoot of several feet in length towards an aperture through which a gleam of light was admitted. Some plants are, however, an exception to this general rule, and thrive in less bright situations. Nature has provided some of these with a shade to keep off the intense rays of the sun, as we see in the beautiful green mantle which is wrapped round the delicate blossoms of the lily of the valley, and the clustering leaves which form a retreat for the violet.

The nutriment best suited for each variety of plants is found in those places to which they are indigenous, the soil abounding in variety, affording to all what they require: but there is a tribe of curious and most magnificent plants which derive their sole nourishment from the atmosphere; some of them attain a marvellous size. Splendid specimens are found in the Dutch Islands. Mr. Finlayson speaks of an enormous yam, "whose creeping stem, little thicker than a quill, rises, without almost any earth to cover the root, out of the most arid and sterile situations, covering the trees with its clusters of branches and leaves, and throwing out masses of tuberculous excrescences, one of which was found to weigh no less than four hundred and seventy pounds, and to measure seven feet in circumference," a growth which at once proves what a vast supply of nourishment



must be afforded by the air. It is now more than twenty-three years since this singular class of plants was first cultivated in our gardens; they have become objects of particular attention.

The butterfly plant, when seen for the first time, caused a great sensation: it was looked upon as a most mysterious production; and many of those who visited the gardens at Chiswick, where it first appeared, would scarcely believe that the flower was not an animated insect, which would soon take flight; indeed, it resembles a butterfly much more than it does any plant that we know.

Other plants imbibe their nourishment from trees on which they take root. The *ava* tree, which frequently attains a circumference of fourteen feet, is at first a creeper, which descends from the tree to which it has attached itself; when it reaches the ground it takes root, and the original tree perishes in the embrace of the parasite; as the size of the *ava* increases, it throws out branches, and becomes a fine tree.

The coral island, soon after it rises above the level of the sea, becomes the habitation of plants; the slightest crevice or inequality in the rocks forms a resting place for some of the minute germs which are continually floating in the air; the surface is soon covered with the humble plants which spring from these, and have their chief aliment from the air. These germs, borne imperceptibly to us, have clothed the world in luxuriance. What treasures of beautiful plants may bloom in districts where human footsteps never passed! To circumstances which to us appear but accidental, how much of the beauty of the world is due!—the growth of plants is promoted by those very creatures who seek their support from them—the quadrupeds who crop the herbage increase its luxuriance—the birds drop the seeds in their flight to more distant regions, and thus a continual supply is kept up; sometimes the beasts of the forest, reposing under the shade of the trees, carry the seeds which have fallen on their rough coats to some barren spot, where they are deposited, in due time to spring up into goodly plants. In many plants the seeds are winged with down, which bear them along the wind to other lands; the pods of some, in which the seeds are deposited, burst open at the fitting time and scatter them to a considerable distance. Those who have been near a furze-hedge at the time for the

dispersion of the seeds, often hear the pods burst asunder with a slight explosion. The rose of Jericho has a property strikingly suited to its situation and destination: instead of the capsules shutting, like those of other flowers, in wet weather, they open into segments resembling the petals of a flower, and close when the weather is dry, by which it has been provided that the seeds should sow themselves at the only season in which they could germinate in the hot sandy districts. Some seeds are cast from the trees that bore them, and deposited in the earth beneath their shade, or are borne along by the wind to a place where there is more room. The winged seeds cross wide seas and vast deserts, till they reach a soil suited for their germination. "Brooks and rivers" bear the seeds which have fallen from the branches which overshadow them, to some far-off locality. There is a species of tree which bends its graceful branches to the ground, there to take root and form the most delightful umbrageous arbour that can afford a retreat from the rays of the sun. The various contrivances for the distribution of the seed, and the propagation of plants by other means, are so evident, that it would be impossible they should escape observation.

The preservation of the vegetable tribe is also secured by their wonderful tenacity of life; few of us but have observed, at some time, a plant which had been to all appearance dead, shoot out healthy living sprouts. The club moss of Peru, while deprived of water for some time, becomes completely dried up, folds in its leaves, contracts its roots, and rolls itself up in the form of a ball, and is blown about by the wind; but when it arrives at a moist situation, it projects its roots into the earth, and then the leaves unfolding, change from a dusky brown to a vivid green. Seeds and roots when planted have grown, which had been inclosed in the hands of mummies for hundreds and hundreds of years. The vitality of seeds is indeed marvellous; nothing seems to have power to extinguish the living principle: it cannot be destroyed by intense heat—the seeds from roasted apples and boiled elder-berries, and the kernels of baked prunes, have been sown and have germinated; ground that has remained untilled for a series of years has been known, when turned up, to bring forth plants spontaneously of kinds not found in the neighbourhood; plants



which had never been seen but on the sea-shore, sprang up forty miles inland, on ground which was turned up a depth of twenty feet, in sinking a well; the seeds must have been wafted by the wind to that spot, where they had lain buried for years, and where they retained their vitality, and only required the air and sun to produce their germination. By the vast diffusion of vegetable life, the earth is indeed beautiful in an eminent degree: the rugged banks and swamps are covered with soft verdure: and even the rocks, which seem in their very nature sterile, afford a place where the moss and lichen find a habitation. Amidst the sandy deserts of the torrid zone, the weary traveller is refreshed by unexpected verdure, more precious to his sight from the contrast which the oasis, blooming with the richness of vegetation, forms to the desolate wastes by which he is surrounded.

Vegetation is deterred by no temperature from finding an habitation. In the hot springs near a river of Louisiana, where the temperature rises from  $122^{\circ}$  to  $145^{\circ}$ , shrubs and trees were seen growing as well as humbler plants. In a hot spring in the Manilla Islands, which raises the thermometer to  $187^{\circ}$ , plants were found; in one of the Geysers of Iceland, hot enough to boil an egg in four minutes, a species of chava has been got; and vegetation has been observed in the boiling springs of Arabia and the Cape of Good Hope. A spring was discovered in the island of Amsterdam, in the mud of which, far hotter than boiling water, a species of liverwort was found; a squill bulb, put down in sand which was kept up to a temperature exceeding that of boiling water, germinated. In the extreme of cold, vegetation may be found: the reindeer, in the frozen regions which they inhabit, are supported for a considerable part of the year on the lichens which grow buried in the snow. In fact, there is scarcely a situation in which plants are not to be found—even in the sulphureous springs and in the openings of lead-mines, where the lead has been thrown up, the vernal sandwort grows luxuriantly,—situations which might have been supposed fatal to vegetable life.

No conjuror ever exhibited such magical changes as Nature presents to her attentive observer: whole forests changing their colour from dusky brown to vivid green as he looks on—plants grow-

ing at a rate which seems absolutely incredible, were not the growth ascertained by accurate measurement—light seen to issue from flowers, the sunflower, marygold, nasturtium, and emitting sparks, or giving out mild gleams of light—fire seeming to proceed from every part of a particular species of fungi which is found in dark, warm, and damp situations; the light failing when the plant is put into a vessel from which the air is exhausted, and reappearing when it is admitted,—an effect supposed to be occasioned by a change of oxygen into carbonic acid; during which a slow combustion takes place, dead and dying wood becoming luminous.

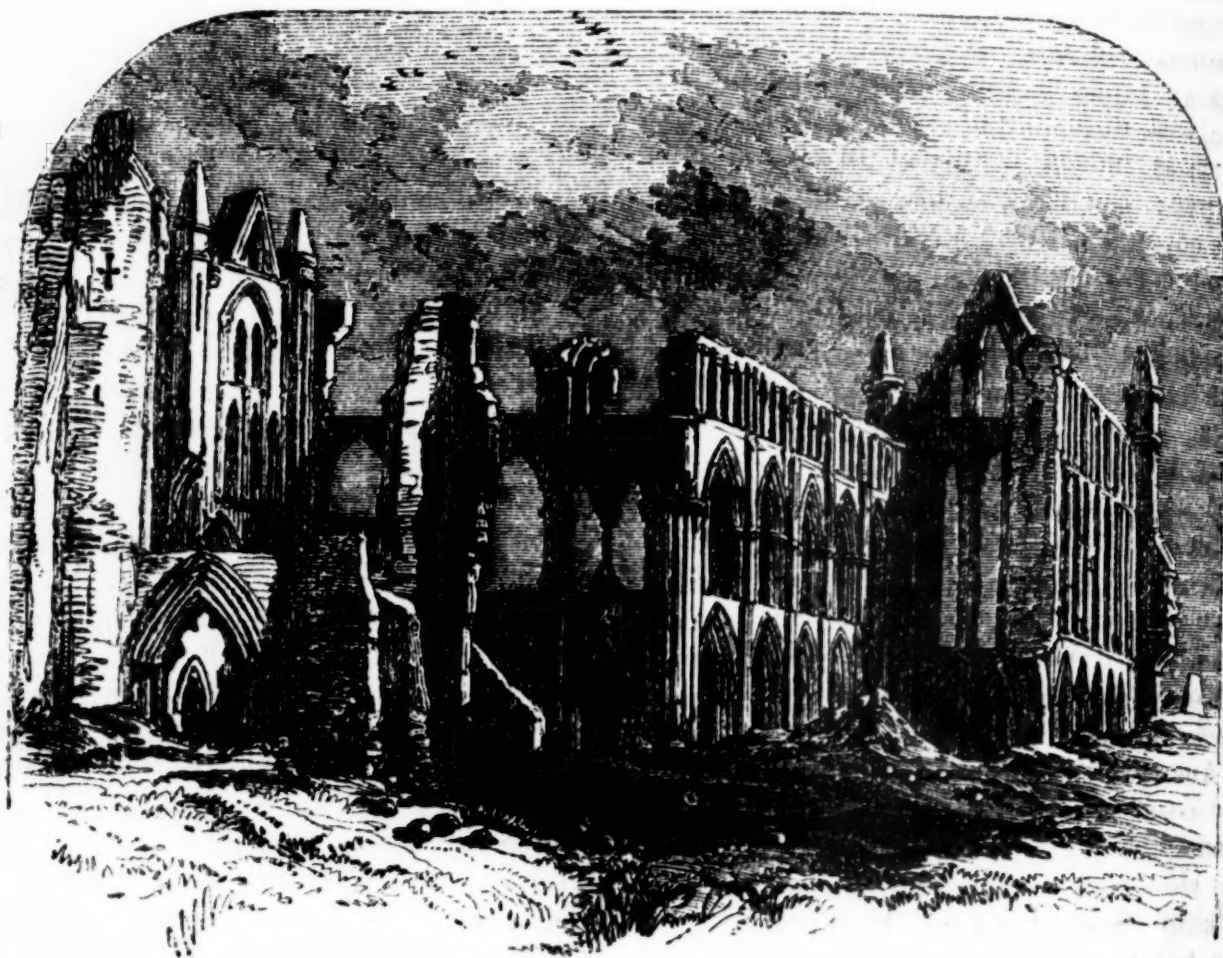
The proximity of nutritious and poisonous substances is a marvellous fact. The *Jatropha manihot* yields from the root a substance known as cassava, which is extensively used as food in the West Indies, the tropical regions of America, and upon the African coast: the cakes prepared from it are the only provisions which the natives take in their voyages on the Amazon; from these cakes the tapioca used in this country is manufactured: yet the very root which is productive of wholesome food furnishes a deadly poison; a few drops of the juice produce death in four or six minutes, and it is with it that the Indians poison their arrows. The arum plant, so common in tropical climates, is a deadly poison; while the foliage is eaten under the name of Indian kales, as well as the tubers, which are converted into bread in several warm countries, and are considered wholesome and nutritive. Our own arum, the wake-robin, is commonly collected in the South of England, and the roots manufactured into arrowroot,—the poisonous nature of the berries is well known. The ascending sap of the *Euphorbia Canariensis* is drawn off by the inhabitants of the Canary Islands, and affords them a refreshing drink, while the descending sap is of a most deleterious nature.

Such are some of the wonders which we find in the vegetable creation. If all that were known were summed up, what a catalogue they would make! and yet, in all probability, they are but a very trifling part of the stores of exquisite mechanism and mysterious properties which may yet be revealed to him who seeks in “unfrequented paths and by the brooklet’s side” for information on a subject so full of interest.



## PEN AND PENCIL SKETCHES OF THE PICTURESQUE.

No. 11.—WHITBY ABBEY, YORKSHIRE.



VIEWED from the entrance of the harbour, from the northward, and also from other points, the ancient abbey and town of Whitby presents a most picturesque and animated scene. This place, so important in our early history, is in the North Riding of Yorkshire; and lies about 246 miles north of London, 22 north north-west of Scarborough, and 47 north-east of York. It is chiefly built on the sloping banks of the river Esk, by which it is divided into two parts—that on the west side being the most populous. The opposite parts of the town are connected by means of a drawbridge so constructed as to allow ships to pass through. At high-water, the river above the bridge expands into a spacious harbour, where ships can lie in perfect security; but at ebb-tide, except in the mid-channel, the harbour is nearly dry.

The first authentic account we have of Whitby is contained in Bede's *Ecclesiastical History*. In the time of that historian, it was called, in the Anglo-Saxon, Streonshall, a name which he interprets in Latin by the words Sinus Fari—that is, "Lighthouse Bay." Subse-

quently, it received from the Danes its present name of Whitby—a word which is probably derived from *huit* or *whit*, white; and *by*, a dwelling.

The Abbey of Streonshall was founded in 658, by St. Hilda, a lady of royal descent, who had previously exercised the office of Prioress of Hartlepool. The new monastery—which, like Tynemouth, was originally intended for monks as well as nuns—in a short time became so famous that a synod for settling certain religious disputes was held here in 664, only six years from the date of its foundation.

Of the number of those who were educated for the ministry at Streonshall, or Whitby, no less than six were accounted worthy of Episcopal dignity—amongst them, John of Beverley was particularly celebrated as one of the most holy and celebrated personages of his age. The monastery had also the honour of producing Cædmon, who may be considered the father of English poetry. This celebrated Anglo-Saxon poet accustomed himself to the study of religious poetry, which he began late in life.

Cædmon was an unlettered peasant,



who knew nothing of poetry or verse until he was stricken in years—when the gift was communicated to him one night as he lay asleep in an ox-stall to which he had retired from a jovial meeting because he could not sing a song when it came to his turn. In his sleep Cædmon composed a hymn; and the gift of verse-making being continued to him when awake, he became an object of attention. St. Hilda, hearing of his wonderful talent, sent for him to the monastery over which she presided, and prevailed on him to abandon the dress and toil of a labourer for a monk's habit and retired leisure at Streonshalh, where he is supposed to have died about the beginning of 680. St. Hilda herself died on the 17th of November in the same year, aged sixty-six. For many ages after her death, the memory of St. Hilda was cherished with veneration by the inhabitants of the eastern coast of England—from the Humber to the Tweed; nor was superstition slow in ascribing to her many deeds of marvellous power.

Amongst the curiosities of this part of the coast are the ammonitæ, or snake-stones, found in almost every place where the alum rock exists, and particularly at Whitby Scar, between high-water and low-water mark. This scar, or rock, is formed by a stratum of alum mine, nearly on a level with the surface of the ocean, and the snakes (as they are called) are all enclosed in hard elliptical stones, which seem to have been stuck therein, being coiled up in spiral volutes, and every way resembling that animal in their form and shape, save only in the head, which always is wanting. These fossil shells were long supposed to have been real snakes, and the want of heads was no valid objection to the hypothesis, since the monkish tradition alleged that the whole race of serpents, by which the territory of Lady Hilda had been infested, were at once decapitated and petrified through that good saint's prayers. Our modern geologists have, however, given a more reasonable explanation of these fossils, which are here met with of various sizes.

It is also ascribed to the power of St. Hilda that the wild geese which in winter fly in great flocks to lakes and unfrozen rivers of the southern parts, to the great amusement of many fall down suddenly upon the ground when they are upon their flight over certain fields in the neighbourhood of Whitby. Camden attributes this

circumstance to "some occult quality of the ground, and to somewhat of antipathy between it and the geese, such, as they say, is betwixt wolves and scryllaroots." The knowledge of science has, however, advanced since the days of Camden, and points out the origin of the fable from the number of sea-gulls that, when flying from a storm, often alight near Whitby, and from the arrival of woodcocks and other birds of passage, which, being tired, do the same upon their arrival after a long flight.

Ælfreda, the daughter of King Oswy, succeeded St. Hilda in the office of abbess, and died in 713. From this period until 867 nothing certain is known respecting the history of the monastery, except that in the latter year it was destroyed by the Danes, who about the same time destroyed various other places upon the eastern coast. After having remained in ruins for upwards of 200 years, it was in 1075 re-established by Reinfred, one of the monks of Evesham. William de Percy, a powerful Norman baron who had known Reinfred before he became a monk as a soldier in the army of William the Conqueror, was the principal contributor to the new foundation, which was dedicated to St. Peter and St. Hilda, and appropriated to monks solely. Under a succession of abbots the monastery of Whitby continued to flourish until its suppression in 1539. At the dissolution, Richard Cholmley, Esq., obtained a lease for twenty-one years of the site of the abbey and several portions of its lands. In 1550 these were sold by the Crown to John, Earl of Warwick; but they eventually came into the possession of the family of Cholmley, who enjoy many valuable rights and privileges as lords of the manor of Whitby. On the dissolution of the monastery the roof was stripped of lead, the bells were taken down, and only the bare walls left to the mercy of the weather, which, together with certain helps from the hand of man, has reduced the once stately building to the fragment which remains. The tower, which formed so fine a feature of the abbey-church, fell no longer ago than 1830.

A singular custom, called "making the penny stake hedge," is annually performed at Whitby by certain tenants of the lord of the manor. It consists in driving a certain number of stake, which, according to the ancient form, were to be cut with a knife of the value of one penny, on the south side of the Esk, at low-water mark, at nine in the morning of Ascension-day, while a man with a horn blows, "Out upon you!



Out upon you!" to the shame of the persons whose duty it is to drive the stakes. The origin of this custom is related in the following curious legend:—

"In the fifth year of the reign of King Henry II., after the conquest of England by William Duke of Normandy, we may here mention that William de Bruce, the Lord of Sneaton, called Ralph de Piercy, with a gentleman and freeholder who was then called Allatson, did, in the month of October, the 16th day of the said month, appoint to meet and hunt the wild boar, in a certain wood or desert called Eskdaleside. The wood or place did belong to the abbot of the monastery of Whitby, who was called Sedman. There the aforesaid gentlemen did meet with their boar, staves, and hounds in the place aforesaid, and there found a great wild boar, and the hounds did run him very well near about the chapel and hermitage of Eskdaleside, where there was a monk of Whitby, who was an hermit. The boar being sore wounded and hotly pursued, and dead run, took him in at the chapel door, and there laid him down and presently died. The hermit shut the hounds forth from the chapel, and kept himself within at his meditation and prayers, the hounds standing at bay without. The gentlemen in the thick of the wood being behind their game, following the cry of their hounds, came to the hermitage, and found the hounds round the chapel. Then came the gentlemen to the door of the chapel, and called the hermit, who did open the door and came forth, and within lay the boar dead; for the which the gentlemen, in a fury because their hounds were put off their game, did (most violently and cruelly) run at the hermit with their boar-staves, whereof he died.

"The gentlemen, knowing their peril, took sanctuary at Scarborough; but at that time the abbot being in great favour with the king did turn them out, and exposed them to the severity of the law. The hermit being at the point of death, desired the presence of the abbot, and asked him to send for the gentlemen who had so cruelly wounded him. The abbot and the gentlemen in due time arrived, and the hermit being very weak said: 'I am sure to die of these wounds.' The abbot answered: 'They shall die for thee.' 'But,' said the hermit, 'not so; for I freely forgive them my death, if they be content to be enjoined to this penance for the safeguard of their souls.' The offenders, anxious to save their lives, bade

the hermit enjoin what he would, who then said: 'You and yours shall hold your lands of the Abbot of Whitby, and his successors, in this manner—that upon Ascension-eve you, or some of you, shall come to the Wood of the Stray Head, which is Eskdaleside, the same day at sunrising, and then shall the officer of the abbot blow his horn to the intent that you may know how to find him; and he shall deliver unto you, William de Bruce, *ten stakes, ten stout staves, and ten yeddes*, to be cut by you, or those that come for you, with a knife of a penny price; and you, Ralph de Piercie, shall take one-and-twenty of each sort, to be cut in the same manner; and you, Allatson, shall take nine of each sort, to be cut as aforesaid, and to be taken on your backs and carried to the town of Whitby, and so to be there before nine of the clock of the day aforesaid; and at the hour of nine of the clock (if it be full sea, to cease that service), as long as it is low water, at nine of the clock, the same hour each of you shall set your stakes at the brim of the water—each stake a yard from another—and so *yedder* them as with your *yeddes*, and so stake on each side with your *stout staves*, that they stand three tides without removing by force of the water. Each of you shall make them in several places at the hour aforesaid—except it be full sea at that hour—which when it shall happen to pass, that service shall cease; and you shall do this service in remembrance that you did (most cruelly) slay me. And that you may the better call to God for repentance and find mercie, and do good works, the officer of Eskdaleside shall blow his horn—*Out upon you!—Out upon you!—Out upon you!* for the heinous crime of you. And if you and your successors do refuse this service—so long as it shall not be full sea—at that hour aforesaid, you and yours shall forfeit all your lands to the Abbot of Whitby, or his successors.' The hermit's stipulation having been agreed to by the culprit, and also the abbot, the wounded man died the 18th Dec., 1159."

Sir Walter Scott, in *Marmion*, in alluding to the above legend, and also to those respecting the Whitby snakes, and the alighting of birds, says:—

"Then Whitby's nuns exulting told,  
How in their house three barons bold  
Must menial service do;  
While horns blow out a note of shame,  
And Monks cry 'Fye upon your name!  
In wrath, for loss of silvan game,  
St. Hilda's priest ye slew.'



'This, on Ascension-day, each year,  
While labouring on our harbour pier,  
Must Herbert, Bruce, and Percy hear.'  
They told how in their convent-cell  
A Saxon princess once did dwell,  
The lovely Edelfled;  
And how, of thousand snakes, each one  
Was changed into a coil of stone,  
When holy Hilda pray'd:  
Themselves, within their holy bound,  
Their stony folds had often found.  
They told, how sea-fowls' pinions fail,  
As over Whitby's towers they sail,  
And sinking down, with flutterings faint,  
They do their homage to the saint."

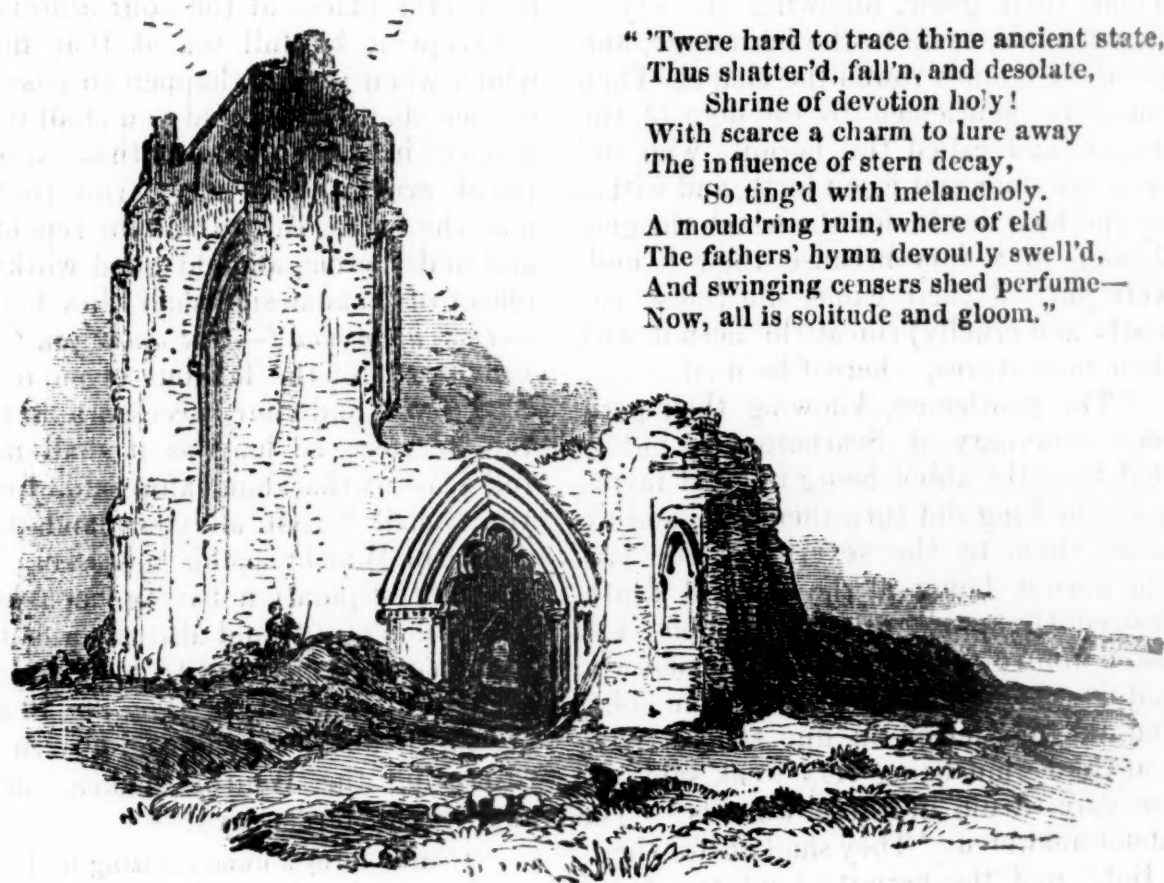
The ruins of the once famous abbey stand on a cliff 240 feet high, south-east of, and overlooking the town. The existing remains consist of the choir, the north transept, and part of the west front. The offices of the monastery have been entirely removed. The abbey-church was constructed in the usual form of a cross, and had three aisles. Over the centre of the cross rose a large tower; the length of the church was about 252 feet; the breadth of the middle aisle about 30 feet, that of the side aisles each 13 feet; the height of the tower was 104 feet, that of the walls 60 feet.

In the town of Whitby the streets, in both parts of the town, are narrow, but

generally well paved and lighted. The ground on each side of the river rises rapidly, especially on the east side. The harbour has 10 feet of water and upwards in the spring tides. From the lighthouse, on the western pier, a tide-light is displayed at night-time, as long as there is eight feet water at the bar during the same period of the tide; in the day a flag is hoisted on the west cliff. It is high water at Whitby Pier at forty minutes past three o'clock, at the full and change of the moon.

There are in Whitby a custom-house, town-hall, dispensary, a seamen's hospital, places of public worship, in addition to those of the Church of England, for several classes of Dissenters.

There are also several excellent schools, and other useful public institutions. The principal trades carried on in Whitby are ship-building and the manufacture of sail-cloth. Its principal imports are coals from Newcastle and Sunderland; and timber, hemp, flax, tar, iron, and tallow, from the Baltic. Alum, manufactured in the neighbourhood, is shipped at Whitby; but the principal article of export is stone for building, of which large quantities are sent to London.



"'Twere hard to trace thine ancient state,  
Thus shatter'd, fall'n, and desolate,  
Shrine of devotion holy!  
With scarce a charm to lure away  
The influence of stern decay,  
So ting'd with melancholy.  
A mould'ring ruin, where of old  
The fathers' hymn devoutly swell'd,  
And swinging censers shed perfume—  
Now, all is solitude and gloom."



## AN EXECUTION IN MEXICO.

THE city of Cosala, in Mexico, situated more than four hundred leagues from the capital, and buried, so to speak, in the vast deserts of the department of Sinaloa, plays, nevertheless, a very important character in Mexican commerce by reason of its gold and silver mines, which are justly celebrated as about the most fruitful in the country. Nothing can be conceived more curious than the striking contrast afforded by its miserable habitations, with the gold which may be seen almost gushing forth from every earthy pore. Nothing is there at the same time more terrible than the manners and customs of its inhabitants, who, buried almost always in the bowels of the earth, signalize in general their sorties from the mines by the wildest debaucheries and the most brutal excesses, before which pale even the most uproarious of piratical orgies. Careless and indifferent to justice, which they brave (thanks to the protection afforded them by their mines, where even its strong arm cannot touch them), the Cosalteco miners in general consider theft as an every-day affair, and assassination as but little more than an agreeable pastime.

I am inclined to think that I was present at almost the only example of firmness displayed by the Mexican authorities since the War of Independence, for under the Spanish rule the laws were not only severe, but most energetically applied, to the great moral good of the country at large.

About a year prior to my arrival at Cosala, some few years since, a young man named Don Antonio, belonging to one of the richest and most powerful families in the city, had been strangled by his companions in a quarrel arising during some tavern debauch. The murderers, to the number of five, fled from the city immediately after the commission of the deed, which was accompanied by horrible circumstances. Tracked by dragoons paid for this especial duty, and by a party of armed retainers, four fell into the hands of justice and perished on the scaffold, and the affair would have soon been completely forgotten had it not been for the exploits of the last survivor, who having become a brigand, explored with an armed band, and with as much good fortune as intrepidity, the environs of Cosala and its mines.

Fortune, however, at length showed herself a fickle jade to master Joachim Pacheco, for a few days before my arrival at Cosala, this redoubtable brigand had been arrested, and was then confined in the city prison, the walk to which had in consequence become the favourite promenade of the gossiping and wonder-loving Cosaltecos. Nothing was talked of throughout the entire city but the arrest of Joachim Pacheco; every one was desirous of beholding the celebrated brigand, and every one found himself served to the very height of his wishes, for the prison, built on a level with the *Plaza* and holding loving company with the church, which indeed it joined, was composed of but one single apartment, lighted by windows formed merely of a species of trellis-work which left its hosts exposed to every eye. Joachim Pacheco possessed one of those open and joyous looking countenances which at the first glance almost attracts the interest of the spectator. In spite of the very ticklish position in which he found himself placed, he wore on his features an air of the most perfect calmness, smoked very phlegmatically a slender cigarette, and paid not the slightest attention to the evidences of that popular curiosity of which he was the object. The following day was fixed upon for his trial, and I determined to be present at the ceremony.

A *Juez de Letras*,\* whom I reckoned among the number of my acquaintances, was the sole representative of Cosalteco justice. I proceeded to his domicile about twelve o'clock on the following day, that being the hour which he had appointed for the trial. In fact when I arrived, the bandit had just been ushered into the presence of his judge; and never, certainly, was tribunal less imposing.

The entire furniture of the apartment in which I now found myself, was composed of a grass hammock, suspended by two hooks from the ceiling; two species of chairs formed of bamboo, an old and worm-eaten mahogany table placed before the hammock, and rendered rickety by the unequal and stony flooring of the

\* The *Juez de Letras* is a sort of stipendiary magistrate, in Mexico, with power of life and death; his decrees, however, are not irrevocable; but, in all probability, from a want of knowledge of the fact, condemned prisoners seldom appeal to a higher tribunal.



room; and a common straw mat thrown down before the entrance door. In the hammock there reclined, half sitting, half lying, leaning on his elbow, with his head supported by his hand, the figure of a little, dry, wrinkled old man, whose soiled and threadbare garments did not by any means display the outward symbols of a high judicial office. Upon the table was placed a *brazero*, garnished with a handful of ignited charcoal, for the use of those who might be inclined to smoke; near the *brazero* lay a packet of cigars, some of which having broke loose from their slender fastening, had spread themselves over the table. In the centre of the table stood an inkstand covered with dust, with a yellow and well-gnawed stumpy-looking pen standing up erect from what should have been the reservoir of ink; as to paper, there was none. In short, to complete the picture the reader has but to fancy the person of Master Joachim Pacheco lounging indolently on one of the chairs, on the hinder legs of which he was balancing himself to and fro, turning his back the while upon the two dragoons who had served as a guard for the prisoner, and who were now squatted together side by side upon the mat, with their carbines resting between their knees, busily engaged in fabricating cigarettes, until their services should be again called into requisition.

"Well, my man," said the Juez de Letras, arousing himself at length from his luxurious attitude, "we have got to try you, eh?"

"With your permission, senor," said Joachim, who, rising from his seat without replying to the Judge, directed his steps towards the table on which was placed the *brazero*, and lighted a cigarette which he held between his fingers.

"No apologies, my man," replied the Judge, "smoking is one of the great occupations of life, I know,—but, to tell you the truth, since the government has taken the monopoly of the trade into their own hands, I must say the tobacco has become detestable."

"But there are still some brave fellows left, Judge, who can exchange shots with the Custom House officers," replied Joachim; "and, if your lordship wishes to convince yourself of the fact, you have but to accept this packet of cigaritos."

"Willingly," replied the Judge, who, taking possession of the proffered bundle, drew forth a cigar, which he forthwith lighted at the *brazero*. "Caramba!"

exclaimed he, after having puffed away in silence for a few moments, "you are right; this *is* delicious. You brigands are the only gentlemen who can smoke good cigars now-a-days. My dear fellow," added he, in a voice of most enticing sweetness, "you must really do me the favour of speaking in my behalf to the contrabandista who has furnished you with these beautiful cigars. It will be a good thing for your friend; for, over and above the money it will put into his pocket, who knows but that it may be in my power to assist him if he should happen to get into a scrape some of these days? —But let us continue the trial. Why the devil did you kill this poor Don Antonio, eh?"

"To tell you the truth, Judge," replied the accused, with the greatest *sang-froid*, "I have never been exactly able to account for this action in my own mind. If I recollect right I was very nervous that day."

"That is certainly an excuse, I must say," returned the Judge, "but it is but a secondary one, and cannot be admitted. By the bye, how much a *rueda* does your contrabandista charge for his cigars?"

"Twelve reals, and each *rueda* is composed of thirty-two packets."

"What the government makes us pay two piastres, or sixteen reals for!" cried the Judge, indignantly. "Why this is a theft, a manifest and shameful theft. But bah! talk not to me of governments! They are all thieves, one greater than another."

"I agree with you there entirely," said Joachim, in a whining voice: "only they don't shoot them when they are found out."

"Ah! by the bye, old fellow, that puts me in mind: the cause is heard—I have got my sentence to pass."

Thus speaking, the Juez de Letras stretched forth his hand in order to take his pen, which, attached to the bottom of the inkstand by the ink long since dried up, resisted all his efforts. "Caramba!" exclaimed he, "I have forgotten to procure some stamped paper: what is to be done?"

Then, as if inspired by a sudden idea, he turned towards the two dragoons. "My children," said he, "for want of some paper to write my judgment on, I take you two to witness that I hereby sentence Joachim Pacheco, the murderer of Don Antonio, to be shot at the expiration of forty-eight hours, and on the spot."



where the crime was committed. The trial is over; remove the prisoner."

At the moment when the condemned was about to cross the threshold of the apartment, the magistrate darted forward, and catching the prisoner by the arm, said:—

"My poor Joachim, I trust that you will not bear me any malice on account of that little formality I have been obliged to go through respecting your affair, and that that will not prevent you from speaking to your friend the contrabandista about me, as you were so good as to promise just now."

\* \* \* \*

The forty-eight hours of existence which still remained for Joachim Pacheco having elapsed, they led him forth from the *capillo ardente*, that terrible ante-chamber of the scaffold, to conduct him to execution. Then, only, did the commandant of the place recollect that he had despatched but the evening before the entire garrison of Cosala, consisting of six dragoons, to serve as an escort for a cart-load of silver which they had forwarded to the capital, and that, for the moment, he and his trusty sword were the sole representatives of military force in the place.

Consequently, as Joachim Pacheco had been sentenced to be shot, the affair became slightly embarrassing. At length the authorities, in order to get out of their dilemma, determined that three men should be forthwith hired to replace the absent dragoons.

This resolution was, however, easier taken than executed, for it would require a delay of more than two hours in order to catch three rascals, not for possessing a sufficiency of good will, but having carbines in a condition fit for service; for all those gentlemen who were so fortunate as to possess firearms, at that time generally employed them on the high roads.

However, after a two hours' search, the Alcade, who was charged with this negotiation, returned with three improvised executioners. But two only of these gentlemen had accepted the conditions which the Alcade had been instructed to offer; the third, a tall, copper-coloured Indian, still held out for a greater remuneration.

"Little, goodness knows, as four reals may be to pay for the death of a man," said he, "I would agree to the terms if the condemned was any one else; but Joachim Pacheco is my friend, my inti-

mate friend, and I most certainly will not shoot him under six reals: that is my lowest price."

As the hour fixed for the execution had already passed, the Alcade, without allowing himself to be stopped by this unfortunate incident, ordered the departure of the *cortége*. The crowd moved onwards, and soon after appeared the condemned himself, followed by a monk charged with the duty of exhorting the prisoner in his last moments.

"My son," said the monk, addressing himself to Pacheco, and presenting to him as he spoke a little silver crucifix—"my son, you are a happy mortal, for this very evening, thanks to the absolution I shall give you, you may make yourself certain of supping in heaven."

"Thanks, *padre*," replied poor Joachim, who, to do him justice, seemed sufficiently resigned to his lot—"thanks for your kind words; but I am not by any means selfish, and since you can so perfectly comprehend my situation and the happiness that awaits me, why, take my place—and above all, no thanks—for I offer it you most willingly."

"That cannot be, my son," replied the monk, whom this proposition did not by any means appear to please; "you have killed your fellow-creature, and therefore must die, so society wills."

"That is very stupid of society!" cried Pacheco.

"It is very just, my son," returned the monk.

"Stupid! I repeat it."

"Perfectly just, my son."

"Ridiculous!"

"Showing a good example."

"Most profoundly immoral, if you come to that," vociferated Joachim Pacheco, in a rage; "for, reply to the question I am going to put to you: A man steals a horse, and from that moment the world calls him a thief; but the next day another man steals from the first this very same horse: how would you name this second thief?"

"Why, as you have just this moment said yourself—a thief, to be sure," replied the monk, accepting the discussion.

"Very well, *padre*, we are agreed on that point; let us pursue our argument. By what name now would you call one who slays his fellow-creature?"

"An assassin, a murderer, to be sure."

"Better and better. And those who kill this man, what are they then?"

The *padre* reflected for a moment before replying, then he cried—"In fact, it is



very silly of me discussing with you in this way. You are condemned justly, that is sufficient; you are an ignorant man, and I have at home four volumes of the works of St. Augustine, who is most certainly of my opinion respecting the punishment of death."

"That is nothing at all to me," murmured the condemned, but little satisfied at the result of the argument. "Saint Augustine himself would only lose his time if he sought to convince me of the justice of my death."

At these irreverent words the monk brandished the heavy crucifix which he carried, and let it fall with its full weight on the shoulders of poor Joachim, who uttered a cry of pain.

"The Saviour pardons, and does not strike," muttered Joachim, in a low voice.

"Be it so," replied the monk; "but in all cases you shall not have my absolution."

These simple words produced a wonderful effect upon the prisoner; from the argumentative and impudent individual he had been before, he became humble and submissive. "I ask your pardon, worthy padre," he exclaimed, "for all these absurdities; I own myself in the wrong; but promise me also that on your part you will give me absolution."

"Certainly, my son," joyously replied the monk, enchanted at having remained master of the field of battle, "I promise it to you. For the rest, do not imagine that contradiction irritates me; I love, on the contrary, to discuss with my fellow-creatures, in order that I may enlighten their benighted minds."

For sole reply, poor Joachim contented himself with rubbing the shoulder with which the crucifix had so rudely come in contact, and marched on in silence.

About a quarter of an hour after this consultation, the party arrived at the spot fixed upon for the execution. It was upon the banks of a wide and limpid stream, shadowed by a mass of luxuriant tropical vegetation, and at the foot of a gigantic tree, under which the unfortunate Don Antonio had been strangled. On this spot there was placed, the foot fixed in the earth, a solid wooden cross of about four feet in height, and furnished with a species of bench at about one-third of its elevation. This cross, in general attached by a chain to the wall of the prison, where it was exposed as a sort of bugbear to the eyes of the populace, had already served

for more than one execution—a fact which the numerous bullet-holes in the solid wood bore ample testimony to. Upon the fatal bench was Joachim placed by the executioners, his body firmly bound to the post; as to his arms, they were extended at right angles along each arm of the cross.

Thus placed upon the crucifix, his breast open, Pacheco, being prepared for death, commenced with a firm voice his last prayers.

The established custom in Mexico is, that when the condemned reaches the middle of the *credo*, the officiating priest gives him the absolution in a loud voice, whilst the officer in charge of the shooting party waves his sword, or rather, shakes a handkerchief as a signal to his men. This time the patient not only terminated his *credo* without being interrupted by death, but he recited also a *confiteor* and an act of contrition.

The cause of this unheard-of derogation from a usage so well established, arose from the fact that one of the three executioners hired for this occasion—the very same tall Indian of whom we have already spoken—could not fall into terms with the Alcade as to the price.

"I have told you before, and I repeat it to you once for all," cried he, almost indignantly, "that I will never shoot my friend for less than six reals."

As the Alcade was on his side quite as obstinate as the Indian, it would have been a difficult matter to have foreseen what would have been the result of the debate, had not my friend the Juez de Letras put an end to the dispute by an act of the most unheard-of devotion.

"Let some one among you," he cried, "run back to Cosala, and fetch me the carbine and pouch, formerly the property of Joachim Pacheco, which he will find hanging at my bed-head. I would not part with this carbine for thirty piastres; so when the execution is over, they must have the kindness to return it to me, for it forms a portion of my law-fees and perquisites."

A man was soon mounted on horseback, and despatched as hard as he could gallop to Cosala. In less than half an hour he returned, bearing with him the anxiously-expected carbine.

"Now," said the Juez de Letras, as he charged the firelock with his own hand, "where is the honest fellow who wishes to gain four reals?"

On hearing this proposition, several



leperos\* stepped forward into the circle. The Juez chose from amongst them the man whom he imagined the most determined (an old thief of his acquaintance), and handed to him the carbine, and four reals.

The triumphant Alcade could not restrain himself from whispering to the Indian who had refused his price :

"Well, José, you see we can do without you after all, eh?"

José was furious at having thus missed his tip, but he smothered his anger the best way he could, and contented himself with muttering :—

"Never mind; it is by the work we recognise the artist: we shall see presently."

In fact, the fatal moment had at length arrived; the three leperos, armed with their carbines, had taken up their position at four paces from the condemned, and now only waited the signal to fire.

The officer waved his sword, but only one report was heard. Joachim Pacheco uttered a terrible cry, which was drawn from him by fear only, for the ball had contented itself by cutting away one of the sandals which hung from his feet, and had lost itself in the stream beneath. As to the other executioners, they had excellent reasons for not having fired: the first had imagined that he heard his name pronounced behind him, and as he was a very polite lepero, he had turned round to reply to the person who had called him; the second, at the very moment of placing his finger on the trigger, fancied that the flint in his carbine was badly cut, and forthwith taking a steel out of his pocket, had begun to hammer it with a most laudable anxiety.

At the second command but one report again was heard: this time also no reproach could be cast on any one, for the lepero who had fired (the one chosen by the Juez de Letras, and who had already fired the first time), stopping his companions who were preparing to follow his example, had darted towards Pacheco in order to behold the result of his address, and now held up with great pride and satisfaction for the inspection of the crowd, a splinter of wood carried away by his ball from the summit of the cross at about six inches above the prisoner's head.

"The shot was in an excellent direction," said he, with an air of vast con-

\* Lepero, a man of the lowest order among the people.

tentment, as with a triumphant step he regained his place in the line.

"Well, Seigneur Alcade," said the Indian José, "what do you think of your cheap sharpshooters? you would have done better to have given me the six reals at once. But I don't bear malice! Offer me this sum now, and I will engage to finish the affair in the twinkling of an eye."

"José," replied the Alcade, gravely, "know that the authorities never have a second price; they will spend more time in shooting Joachim Pacheco, should it be necessary, but they will never accept your proposition."

I will pass over in silence the frightful scene which followed this refusal. During more than half an hour the three leperos kept firing upon the unfortunate Joachim Pacheco, without being able, by some inconceivable fatality, to hit him in a vital spot.

The lepero whom the Juez de Letras had chosen from having known him of old as a thief and assassin, completely deceived his hopes, for he did not even once touch the prisoner.

At length the miserable Pacheco, rousing himself for a moment from the state of stupor into which fear and the agony of his wounds had thrown him, cried out, in a broken voice :—

"Are you there, José?"

"Yes, here I am," cried the Indian, advancing a few paces.

"Well, kill me, *Amigo*!"

"I ask nothing better, my dear Pacheco, but I want six reals for the job, which the Alcade refuses to give me."

"Is that all? Do not be uneasy then. First of all, blow my brains out—and after that take from my trousers pocket all the money you will find there."

"Are there six reals?"

"There is a piastre—but do make haste, *Amigo*,—for I am suffering torments here."

"My poor friend," said the Indian José, shouldering his carbine, and taking a long and steady aim at Joachim—"my poor friend, with a piastre in his pocket, and allowing himself to be riddled for half an hour in this barbarous way without saying anything!" He still spoke, when one report was heard.

A shout of acclamation was the answer of the crowd.

The ball had stricken Joachim between the eyes, and the redoubtable brigand was a corpse.



José, without losing an instant, precipitated himself on the dead body, and anxiously buried his large hands in the trousers pockets of his friend.

"Two reals,—a few cigars,—and an old pack of cards!" cried he in despair,

holding up the various articles to the crowd. "Ah, Joachim! Joachim! I never thought you would have played me such a shabby trick! The recollection of your death will be for me the cause of everlasting remorse!"

## ANIMAL LIFE IN THE OCEAN.

### CHAPTER XIV.

GENERAL REMARKS ON THE GEOGRAPHICAL DISTRIBUTION OF THE ANIMAL AND VEGETABLE KINGDOMS—DEPENDENCE OF ALL CREATED BEINGS ON SPACE AND TIME—INFLUENCES WHICH DETERMINE THE DISTRIBUTION OF MARINE CREATURES—THE EIGHT VERTICAL REGIONS OF ORGANIC LIFE IN THE ÆGEAN—THE INHABITANTS OF THE RED SEA.

WHEN we depart from our home, and visit distant countries, we gradually find ourselves surrounded by a new animal and vegetable world. If, for instance, we cross the Alps into Italy, the birch, the pine, the brier, and the oak, no longer meet our glance, and are very rarely visible; while lemons, olives, and oranges, grow very luxuriantly, until we even find palms on the Mediterranean coast. Thus our original comrades desert us on a lengthened journey, one after the other, until, at the end of our travels, we find ourselves surrounded by entirely new associations.

We may traverse the globe from one pole to the other, or cross the equator; but, in every direction, north and south, east and west, nature gradually changes her garb, never again to assume it. The plants and animals of the temperate and cold regions of the north, vary from those of the corresponding climate in the southern hemisphere and in the tropics. Each portion of the globe supports its peculiar inhabitants.

Similar changes in the vegetable and animal forms meet our sight, on ascending from the plains to the summit of lofty mountains.

At the foot of Mount Etna, blossoms the luxuriant flora of a milder sky—the palm-tree (*Chamærops*) and the pomegranate, the cotton-plant and the sugarcane. If we ascend, the cool shadow of splendid chestnut-groves meets us, followed by the oaks, till we at last attain the desolate regions, where all vegetation is palsied by the intense coldness of an

eternal winter. With every thousand feet we have risen, we seem to have approached so many degrees nearer to the pole.

This wondrous change of form, which adorns the different countries and heights of *terra firma* with such an incessant variety of living things, is repeated in the ocean kingdom. Here, too, we find every larger division of the sea provided with the inhabitants peculiar to it. Here, too, we find, in perpendicular descent from the surface, similar changes in organic nature, as on land in the different elevations above the level of the sea.

Thousands of perished types of animals and plants, which have flourished, and in their turn decayed, give us the valuable lesson that everything created is subjected to time. Only at one period of the planetary life did each genus or species find all those conditions united, in which it could reach its greatest perfection. But the surrounding nature is imperceptibly modified in the course of centuries. The once blooming races gradually pine away. They can no longer maintain the struggle with the new forms which, being favoured by altered circumstances, appear on the scene in all the strength of youth; and, on their decadence, only the consolation remains to them, that a similar fate impends over the haughty *parvenus* by whom they have been thrust aside.

All created beings are as dependent on space as on time. Of the countless animal and plant varieties which inhabit



the globe, each finds only at one spot of it all those climatic influences and conditions of soil combined in which its life attains perfection. Some, gifted with a more yielding or a more energetic nature, occupy a wide space on the surface of the earth; they are found enjoying a healthy existence, spread over entire hemispheres. Others, again, have to be contented with their own home, and are not unfrequently limited to a single bay, a single mountain slope.

In this close, mysterious connexion between the producing soil and its productions, is doubtlessly hidden a great part of the magical charms of nature. Here all is harmony; we feel it in our heart of hearts, and our eye rejoices at the union of form and colour, as our ear does at the sound of fine music; and what creation of any human artist could be compared with the pictures, whose endless, ever-changing gallery the Master of all worlds displays to us in every zone from Pole to Pole? They pass away in a second; but every minute brings new ones never before seen. Fortunate is the man, who, by attentive, loving observation, has gained a deeper insight of their beauties! To him every walk reveals sources of the purest artistic enjoyment.

The causes that attach animals and plants to certain localities are partially clear and patent to us. The warmth or coldness of the sea, produced by currents, geographical position and depth, quiet or troubled, pure or impure water, abundant provision or the want of it, the fineness or softness of the soil, sufficiently explain, in many cases, why various genera of marine creatures are here found in large numbers, or there are entirely absent. A glance at their structure teaches us sometimes the physical qualities, which their residence must necessarily possess. We see at once if an Alga requires the protection of an unruffled calm or can defy the storm; if it is found to anchor on the rocks, or to sink its roots into a yielding soil. Many a Mollusc can only breathe in the purest water, or requires hard stone, to which it attaches itself. In other soft-bodied tribes, on the other hand, the respiratory organs are protected against the admission of shifting sand, and permit them to hide from their foes in the mud.

In many cases, however, the reasons which decide the distribution of the Marine creatures remain a mystery: and, in the same way, as no one yet can explain

why the family of Quinine trees only grows on a narrow belt on the Northern half of the South American Andes, or the Tea bush is confined to a small corner of Asia; it is impossible to explain why, under suitable climatic influences, and apparently equally favourable circumstances, the tropical sea supports numerous coral reefs, and then again dashes against shores which are quite free from them.

There are evidently, in addition to the known influences, others working in secret, which draw round each being the mysterious circle, beyond which it must not pass. Their explanation is partly reserved for the future, and is among the most interesting questions of the present. Many may, perhaps, remain eternally closed to the human mind.

The geographical distribution of the plants and animals found on land, is indubitably much more easily decided, than that of the denizens of the sea. The inquirer can mount the loftiest mountains to the last trace of vegetation; and, far above these summits, his eye pierces the pure atmosphere, in which the Condor soars in solitary majesty; he can traverse the valleys, or descending into the interior of the earth, even survey and collect the subterranean flora; but he cannot walk over the submarine meadows or through the thickets of the fucine forests; he is not permitted to sink into the depths of ocean.

But, in spite of these natural obstacles, his investigating mind, connected with his insatiable curiosity, has granted him means to consult the abysses and their secrets, and partly to raise the veil, behind which the life of the sea is hidden. Armed with the dredge, he filches from the bottom of the sea Plants, Polypes, Molluscs, and Echino-dermata, and learns the different provinces they select for their abode; or he lowers the line for hundreds, nay, thousands of fathoms, in order to draw up with it specimens of Corals, and protozoic shells.

To the lately deceased and much regretted Professor Forbes, of Edinburgh, we are indebted for the first detailed and extended investigations of this nature; and we fancy we cannot give our readers a better idea of what the bed of the sea looks like than by informing them of the results of his examinations both in the ocean and in the British waters.

The distribution of Marine animals, according to Forbes, is regulated by three principal influences (*climate, constituents*



of the water, and depth), which are modified in many ways by various other secondary or local conditions.

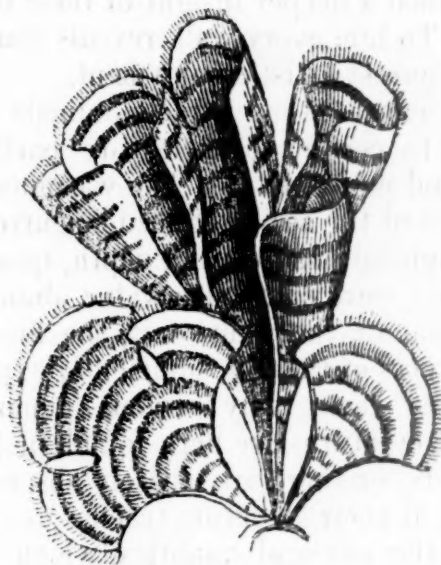
The influence of the slightly salted water of the Black Sea is certainly more the cause than is the climate, that the Medusæ, which are found in such numbers of families and individuals in the Straits of Gibraltar, gradually decrease, the nearer we draw to the Greek waters; and the Zoophytes also grow scarcer and decrease in size in the Eastern Mediterranean. Yet Corals, for instance, are found in the Levant sea, but are too small to be employed in trade. Many species, characteristic of the Mediterranean, are no longer found in the Greek waters. According as the soil is composed of rock, sand, slime, or gravel, or is naked or covered with Algæ, the number of given species also varies. The appearance of Sponge often depends on the presence of isolated submarine pinnacles, which rise from the deep water near the coast. As the greater portion of the sea-bed is formed of mud, the Bivalved Molluscs surpass the Univalved in individual members, but not in the variety of species. Where the ground is covered with Algæ, the naked Molluscs (*Dorides*, *Eolids*, *Tritons*) are more frequent than elsewhere; where it is rocky, thick-shelled Gasteropods and active Cephalopods prevail. There are but few species of the soft or rayed animals, which appear without distinction on every soil. The permanent or temporary admixture of soft water has a great influence. Rivers produce large and slimy districts, which offer a peculiar fauna; and periodical torrents are frequently dangerous to the life of several species.

In the Eastern Mediterranean, the marine creatures are divided according to the depth, into eight well defined regions or provinces, which are distinguished from each other by regular groupings of the inhabitants. Certain species are restricted to a single region. Others extend over several provinces, though they do not cross certain frontiers above or below.

The first region or littoral zone extends from the highest water-mark to twelve feet below the level of the sea. The uppermost portion, which lies between ebb and flow, and therefore remains exposed to the air for several hours daily, occupies only a narrow space, for, in the Mediterranean, the tides are scarcely perceptible; still it is inhabited by some characteristic species. In the water belt

immediately beneath it, are found the species most peculiar to the Mediterranean, and which most clearly reveal the influence of the climate; for their vivid colouring reminds us of the southern tropical seas. Only in this lower demesne of the highest region, do we notice regular horizontal limitations of species in the Eastern Mediterranean. Thus, within this belt, the rocks on the coast of Asia Minor are distinguished from those of the Archipelago, by the great quantity of a splendid sort of Coral (*Cladocora cespitosa*), which grows in clusters six to eight feet below the level of the sea. In the protected bays of Lycia and Caria, within this region, also grows an enormous quantity of gaily coloured, strangely formed Sponges, while, at the Cyclades, the lovely Red Sea Anemone (*Actinia rubra*) occupies the corresponding space.

The *Padina pavonia* is everywhere the characteristic Alga of this belt; and between its graceful fronds Crustaceans may be noticed swimming about, while in the crevices of the rock, on which it grows, lie numerous fish of the Blenny



PADINA PAVONIA.

and Uranoscopus families, which, like all the other marine animals of this province, are remarkable for their lustrous colours. The inhabitants of the lower section of this narrow, but various zone, are equally characteristic, especially those that live on the smooth bed of the sea covered with sea-grass (*Zostera marina*).

Here the *Pinna squamosa* is principally found; and many places swarm with Cuttle-fish. An infinity of Rissoa, small graceful Univalves, live on the leaves of the *Zostera*.

The second region, which extends to a depth of ten fathoms, is distinguished by



the appearance of large *Holothuriæ*, or Sea Cucumbers.

In the third region (10 to 20 fathoms) *Caulerpa prolifera*, and handsome pea-green sea-weed and *Zostera oceanica* are found, but cease at the lowest limit. This is a transition zone, which offers but few peculiarities. The large *Holothuriæ* are still numerous.

The fourth region (20 to 35 fathoms) is rich in Algæ (*Dictyomenia volubilis*, *Sargassum salicifolium*); but especially in calcareous corallines, which are found here more frequently than in any other zone. There is also a large number of Sponges, and among them some of the handsomest species introduced into trade. Nullipores are found in large quantities.

In the fifth region (35 to 55 fathoms) Algæ are much rarer than in the former; Sea Urchins and Star Fish, on the other hand, more numerous; Polypes not numerous.

In the sixth region (55 to 79 fathoms) the rocky ground is usually covered with Nullipores—vegetable creations formerly counted among the Zoophytes, on account of their calcareous nature. Algæ have become extremely rare; though a large number of herbivorous Molluscs live here, which find their food in the vegetable Nullipores.

In the seventh region, too (80 to 105 fathoms), the sea-bed is remarkably rich in Nullipores. The herbaceous Algæ and naked Molluscs have entirely disappeared. Polypes are scarce; but Sea Urchins, Stars, Crustaceans, and tubicolous Annelids still numerous.

In the eighth region (105 fathoms to 1380 feet below the surface), the fauna

is distinguished from that of all the higher zones by the presence of peculiar species. Neither its limits, the number of species, nor individuals, diminish with the depth. Foraminifera are extremely numerous in the sand of this region, and seem to be a different sort from those of the higher zones. No plants are found. At a depth of 300 fathoms animal life also probably ceases.\*

Of the varieties that occupy a broad vertical space, more than one-half are such as have also a wide geographical distribution.

The Conchylia, and other animals of the lowest zones, are generally either white or colourless; while those in the higher are remarkable for their splendid colouring. The influence of light may be clearly recognised from this fact.

If one species is found in several regions, it only attains its highest development in one of them.

Just as on scaling a mountain, we seem to be drawing gradually nearer to the pole, as the whole of nature assumes a more northern character, so in the sea each increase of depth is equivalent to a growing distance from the Equator.

After this short sketch of the division of the organic world in the Greek waters, it will not be uninteresting to cast a glance at the existing relations in the British seas.

Here the littoral zone, which, owing to the strong tides, forms a much wider belt than in the Mediterranean, forms four subdivisions, each of which is remarkable for the predominance of special Fuci and Conchylia.

The highest water-mark is occupied by

\* D'Orbigny divides the productions on the shore of the Bay of Biscay into six zones: the first extending from a French foot below the line of high water to a depth of 20 feet; the second, from 5 to 30 feet in depth; the third, from 15 to 35 feet; the fourth, from 20 to 40 feet; the fifth, from 30 to 60 feet; and, lastly, the sixth, from 40 to 100 feet, beyond which in these seas there is no vegetation.

There are thirty-four species of *Ulvæ* growing between the first and sixth zone; in the latter only *U. tomentosus*, which he considers to be a polypus; sixty-three species of *Fucus*, of which the *F. pygmaeus* and *F. amphibius* alone belong to the first zone; while the *F. loreus*, *F. fibrosus*, *F. sanguineus*, and *F. cornupifolius*, belong to the sixth zone; twenty-nine species of *Ceramium*, of which none are found in the first zone, nor do they extend beyond the fifth, in which occur the *C. coccineum* and *C. agagrophilum*, the latter of which is rare. Two species of *Diatoma*, *D. rigidum* and *D. flocculosum*, occur in the second zone, in which are also found the *Zostera marina* and *Z. Mediterranea*, but the latter rarely.

The numerical proportions of plants in the different zones are as follows:—

	<i>Ulvæ.</i>	<i>Fuci.</i>	<i>Ceramia.</i>	<i>Diatomæ.</i>	<i>Zostera.</i>
1st zone	4	2	0	0	0
2nd „	14	15	9	2	2
3rd „	6	13	12	0	0
4th „	6	13	4	0	0
5th „	0	6	4	0	0
6th „	1 (?)	5	0	0	0

Mémoires du Museum, tom. vi.—W. F. A.



*Fucus canaliculatus* and a Shore-Mussel (*Littorina rudis*), followed in the second subdivision by the Lichinæ and the Common Mussel (*Mytilus edulis*). In this sub-region, as in the third, the rocks are nearly always incrustated with Acorn-shells; so that at ebb tide, a broad white belt, visible at a great distance, runs along all rocky coasts. In the third sub-region, the Common Varech or Kelp (*Fucus articulatus*) predominates, with the Yellow Periwinkle (*Littorina littorea*), and the pretty Purple Shell (*Purpura lapillus*).

In the fourth and last subdivision, the above-mentioned Fuci yield to a new species; the *Fucus serratus*, and new varieties of shells, such as the peculiar Tops (*trochi*), make their appearance.

Below the lowest verge of the ebb, at a depth of about 15 fathoms, extends the zone of the Laminariæ, whose place is taken, on sandy coasts, by grass-wrack meadows. At the extreme edge of this region, Nullipores are the predominating plants. From the 15th to the 20th fathom is the Coralline zone, a province containing many peculiar forms of animal life; but prominent forms of plants appear banished. The majority of its inhabitants, to which our valuable fish belong, are predacious.

Below 50 fathoms, commences the region of the deep sea Corals, in which real stone polypi, of considerable extent, are met with. Numerous Echini and Starfish are also found in these greater depths.

The denizens of our northern seas display to us also a great difference from those of the Greek waters, as might be expected from the considerable variation of climate; but even on the coasts of the British Isles the submarine nature changes with the geographical position. The ocean flora and fauna of the south-west coast of England have a perceptible variation from those of the Irish Sea; and these again from those of the Hebrides. Many animals are found in large numbers on the western coast, and are entirely absent on the eastern. At the west of Ireland, there is a spot distinguished from all other parts of the coast by the presence of a Sea-urchin, which is only met with again in Spain.

In conclusion, we will carry our readers to the tropical waters of the Red Sea, where very different life-pictures are displayed to them. The submarine animal and plant world has undergone an utter

metamorphosis, and nothing will remind them of the denizens of their home seas.

It would be a difficult task to catalogue the immense number of conchylia which cover the bed of the Arabian Gulf. Univalves and bivalves rival each other in colour and size; and while those horn-shells, which grow to a length of one and a half feet, are found there, the giant Tridacna, which is five feet broad, forms entire submarine banks. Three species of bivalves are highly esteemed for their pearls and mother-o'-pearl: a shell, chiefly found off the Egyptian coast, a splendid red Pinna, and a bivalve resembling an oyster. The pearls of the first are rarely clear, but sought for their size and lustre; the second supplies a handsome white mother-o'-pearl, with a delicate, reddish shading; the third, called *Lulu el berber*, is exported in great quantities to Jerusalem, where it is used for mosaic, or worked up into snuff-boxes, rosaries, and crucifixes. In addition, the Arabs obtain a large portion of their domestic utensils, and their personal ornaments, from these submarine treasures. The Nautilus serves them as a cup, the Hornshell for a jug, and a Bivalve for a saucer or plate. Most of the houses at Tehama are formed of corals, so that each hut offers a small naturalist's cabinet. The quantity of Zoophytes and Algæ, which has given that gulf the name of the Weedy Sea, surpasses all conception. When rowing slowly over them, they resemble submarine forests. Some grow perpendicularly like cypresses, others extend their branches like oaks; and between this larger growth, the entire ground is covered with a rich green carpet of creeping plants. The Corals also attain an astounding size. Some, like the Læandrines, always retain a regular specific form, while others assume the strangest shapes, and model themselves after the objects they cover. As regards the other inhabitants of these waters, the remark must suffice, that the Red Sea swarms with countless Medusæ, Salpæ, Crustaceans, and other marine animals. It is also remarkably rich in the most beautiful Sea-urchins: some flat and nearly round, others covered with thorns, which at times are thicker than the quill of a goose's feather. The adjacent lifeless Arabian and Nubian desert forms a strange contrast to this abundance of the ocean.



## CHAPTER XV.

PHOSPHORESCENCE OF THE SEA — CAUSE OF THE PHENOMENON — MAMMARIA SCINTILLANS — GLISTENING ANEMONES AND BEROES — INTENSE LIGHT OF THE PYROSOMA ATLANTICA — PHOSPHORESCENT MARINE PLANTS — PASSAGES FROM BYRON, COLERIDGE, AND CRABBE, RELATING TO THE PHOSPHORESCENCE OF THE SEA.

ANY one who wanders, late in the evening, or amid the gloom of night, along the sea-shore, will be surprised at times by a magnificent scene. Bright flashes of light emerge from the lap of the waters, as if the sea wished to restore to the obscured sky the light it had sucked in during the day. On approaching the edge of the rising tide, and inspecting more closely the sparkling of the dashing wave, the advancing water appears to cover the sand with a layer of fire. On passing the hand over the humid soil, bright spots like stars flash out, and, striking the waters, seem to arouse slumbering flames.

The same wondrous sight also delights the sailor, who draws his furrow through the broad deserts of ocean, especially when his course takes him through the tropical seas.

"When a vessel of war cleaves through the foaming waves with a smart breeze, a person standing at the bulwarks can never gaze his fill of the scenes which the approaching wave offers him. So soon as the exposed side of the vessel heels out of the water, bluish or reddish flames appear to shoot with the speed of lightning upwards from the keel. Indescribably splendid, too, is the scene which, in the seas of the tropical world on a dark night, a shoal of sporting dolphins presents. As they dart through the waves, their path is marked by sparks and intense light. In the Gulf of Cariaco, between Cumana and the peninsula of Maniquarez, I often revelled in this spectacle for hours."—*Humboldt's Views of Nature*.

But, in the colder regions of the ocean, this remarkable phenomenon is also displayed in all its brilliancy. On a dark and stormy September night, on the road from the Sea Lion Island of St. George, which we visited in a previous chapter, to Unalashka, Chamisso saw a glorious phosphorescence, finer than he had ever seen between the tropics. The flashes of light attached themselves to the edges of the sails washed by the spray, and continued to glisten in another element. Ermann also saw, at the southern promontory of Kamtschatka, at a temperature of no more than 4°, the sea equally phos-

phorescent with what he had ever seen during his seven months' stay in the warmest seas. According to him, it is a false idea that the phosphorescence is in any way favoured by a high temperature.

In lively colours, Darwin depicts the splendid scene which the sea offered him, in the latitude of Cape Horn, during a very dark night. A fresh breeze was blowing; and all those parts of the surface, which by day appeared a white foam, now gleamed with a pallid light. The ship impelled two waves of liquid phosphorus before it, and left a long, twinkling, milky track behind it. So far as the eye could reach, the crest of every wave glistened.

When "La Venus" was anchored off Simon's Town, the waves emitted such a powerful light, that the room in which the naturalists of the expedition resided, was lit up as by a flash of lightning. Although above fifty paces from the surf they tried to read by the light of the ocean phosphorescence; but the development was each time too short to allow of this.

Thus, we find the same brilliancy which illumines the nocturnal ocean, between the tropics, with flames of glowing points, and which, on the coasts of the German Ocean, arouses the susceptible mind to lively admiration, also produced in those seas which dash round the most southern points of the continent.

What is the cause of this so glorious, universally-extended phenomenon? How is it that, at certain periods, fire dashes forth from the lap of such an antagonistic element? Instead of delaying the reader by the unfounded hypotheses of the elder naturalists, and explaining to him the errors of the past, we will sooner take up the matter with him at the present stage of our knowledge.

It is now known with certainty, that nearly all the lower animals, especially the *Acalephæ*, with their fry, and also many infusoria, polypes, molluscs, annelids, and crustaceans, possess the power of shining, and hence they produce the wondrous phenomena of oceanic iridescence. If we reflect on their enormous numbers,



we shall not feel surprised that such grand effects are produced by such insignificant animals.

In our northern seas, it is chiefly an animalcule of gelatinous nature, *Mammariæ scintillans*, which represents on the surface of the water the splendid picture of the starry sky.

If a vessel be filled with the gleaming water, the little *Mammariæ*, of the size of a pin's head, may be seen by daylight. Generally transparent as crystal, they only display at one point a milk-like dot. Under the microscope, they are clearly seen to be globular animals, with a hollow at one part of the surface, from which a rather long tentacle projects, which moves slowly about, as if in search of food.

That the light emanates from these animals, can now be most perfectly proved; for if the phosphorescent water is filtered, it entirely loses the power of shining, but the animals that remain in the filter glisten on being shaken. Further, the intensity of the light is always in relation to the quantity of the *Mammariæ*. If, lastly, a bottle filled with sea-water, in which are some of these animals, is shaken in the dark, glistening points are seen falling and rising, and precisely the same thing occurs in daylight.

A blow, or some external irritation, is needed to produce the iridescence in the *Mammariæ*, and most of the other oceanic glistening animals; but there are other creatures (such as *Nereis noctiluca*, *Medusa pelagica*, *Monophora noctiluca*) which spread around them a weak light voluntarily.

Usually, the power of shining is inherent in the external slimy coating of the body. In other cases, the phosphorescence is connected with special organs, or spread over the whole of the body.

M. de Quatrefages observed in the Channel some Annelids in which the muscular substance of the feet was the sole abode of phosphorescence. In the ciliograde *Medusæ* (*Beroë*, *Cydippe*), the cilia, by whose oscillations the animal moves, sparkle in the dark with a bluish light.

In the *Protocharis*, one of the Infusoria, Ehrenberg discovered gleaming organs, whose large-celled structure, full of a gelatinous substance, bears a resemblance to the electrical organ of the *Gymnotus* and of the *Torpedo*.

"If the *Protocharis* be irritated, various flashing dots appear on the cirrus, which gradually increase in size, and illumine

the entire cirrus; at last, the living fire runs also over the back of the Nerëidic Animalcule, so that it looks, under the microscope, like a burning lucifer-match, with a greenish-yellow light."

Among all the organic phosphorescent animals, a *Salpa* (the *Pyrosoma atlantica*) appears to produce the most intense light. The *Pyrosoma* is produced by the aggregation of a large quantity of small individuals, in which the mouth lies to the outside, the vent inwards, near a small cavity. The entire mass of these collected animals thus forms a cylinder open at one end. By a common contraction of all these animals, the central organ is expanded or contracted, and thus the motion is probably effected. Behind the mouth of each individual is a soft opaque substance, of reddish-brown colour and conical shape, in which thirty to forty red points may be distinguished under the microscope; and it is this matter which possesses the exclusive power of emitting light. Herr von Bibra tells us, in his *Voyage to Chili*, that he once caught six or eight *Pyrosomæ*, by whose phosphorescent light he was enabled to read in his perfectly dark cabin. He read to a friend, who lay ill in his berth, a short description of these animals, from a zoological vademecum, by their own light. Although not irritated and in perfect darkness, the slightest touch was sufficient to make them glisten at once. The light of the *Pyrosoma atlantica* is a bluish green, with a very beautiful modification of the tinge.

In the *Pholades*, which dig their abode in the hard stone, as the Bivalves do in the loose sand, the entire body is filled with light. Pliny gives us a short but living description of the phenomenon:—"It is in the nature of the *Pholades*," the reverend Roman writes, "when the light has been removed, to emit a peculiar lustre, which grows larger the more humidity they contain. When eaten, they glisten in the mouth and on the hands. Hence the falling drops shine on the clothes and the ground; so that, doubtlessly, the light we admire in them is connected with their juices."

The observations of Milne-Edwards also agree with this view; for, on proceeding to immerse some *Pholades* in spirits of wine, he saw a glistening matter drip from them, which dropped to the bottom of the vessel, and there continued glistening.

Several fish also possess the faculty of shining. The Swimming Shad, or Moon-



fish, that strange abortion, emits a phosphorescent gleam; and the Punter (*Trigla*) is said to glisten and sparkle at night, so that rays of light may be noticed, extending far along the water, sometimes high and sometimes lower.

With reference to the glistening of the larger marine animals, however, Ermann remarks, that he so frequently found in the belly of the transparent *Salpa pinnata* microscopical crustacean glistening animals, half alive and most lively, others already half-destroyed, that the light of the larger denizens of the ocean may safely be ascribed to the same influences. Fish, then, resemble the great ones of our earth, who only shine so brightly because the little folk supply the light.

According to Bennett, a Shark (*Squalus fulgens*) first described by him is distinguished by an extraordinarily powerful diffusion of light. A captured animal of this sort, when taken into a dark room, produced a very remarkable sight. The entire lower part of the body and head emitted a bright-green phosphorescent light, which gave the thus illuminated fish a truly horrific appearance. The light was permanent, and was not apparently heightened by motion and rubbing. When the Shark died, which did not occur till it had been three hours out of the water, the light on the belly first expired, and then, gradually, on the other parts, remaining the longest on the jaw and fins. The only part of the lower surface of the animal which did not glisten, was the black band round the throat.

Bennett fancied, at first, that the fish had been accidentally covered with phosphorescent matter from the sea; but this suspicion was not confirmed by the closest inspection; while the regularity with which the light covered certain parts of the body, its permanence during life, and disappearance after death, permitted no doubt that the apparition was a peculiar vital expression.

The smallness of the fins in this species of Shark indicates that it is not very active in swimming; and as it only lives on plunder, and evidently belongs to the nocturnal animals, Bennett conjectures that it entices its prey by its phosphorescent power, just as torches are frequently employed in night fishing.

Phosphorescence, too, does not appear quite strange to the ocean plants. Thus, Meyen found, for a distance of nearly 800 miles, between 8° N. latitude and 2° S. latitude, the sea filled with a glistening

plant, which, from this faculty, he christened *Oscillatoria phosphorescens*.

In water drawn from the sea there appeared some fan-shaped stars, like flakes of snow, from the size of a poppy-seed to that of a small bean, and composed of these *Oscillatoria*.

Though the iridescence of the sea-waters is most generally produced by living light-bearers, it also depends at times on putrefying organic fibres and membranes, which owe their origin to the destruction of the original animals.

As Humboldt tells us, in his *Views of Nature*, not even the most powerful magnifying-glass will at times detect animals in the shining water; and yet, whenever the wave strikes against a hard substance, and breaks with a spray, or whenever the water is shaken, a light glistens. The cause of this appearance is probably in the corrupting fibres of deceased molluscs, countless numbers of which are dispersed through the water. If gleaming sea-water be filtered through fine muslin, these fibres and membranes are separated from it in the shape of glistening spots. Perhaps, owing to the countless array of molluscs that inhabit all tropical seas, we ought not to feel surprised if sea-water even glistens when no visible fibres can be separated from it. Owing to the endless distribution of the decayed mass of *Medusæ*, the entire sea may well be regarded as a gelatinous fluid which, though repugnant to man, supplies nourishment for fish.

It is therefore evident that the gleaming of the sea is not any magnetic or electric quality of the water, but is exclusively connected with living or dead organic matter.

But though we know this, we have only drawn one step nearer to the solution of the mystery, without being able to explain its causes: and the question still remains—What is the immediate cause of the iridescence? To this we can, unfortunately, give no certain answer; and, as in all similar cases, we must attempt to explain it by more or less fortunate hypotheses, the following views of Professor Leuckart will probably furnish the best idea of the present position of science with reference to this interesting subject:—

“When we reflect that usually only the external slimy coating of the body glistens, in which a quantity of cast-off cuticles are constantly undergoing the procession of solution; and that this mass, even after leaving the body, and the death of the animal, retains the



faculty of gleaming for some time,—we can hardly refrain from the idea that the phosphorescence must be a simple chymical act depending on this solution. We need not allude to the phosphorus contained in animal substances, which is probably in some cases much more considerable than we are yet aware. It is more difficult to explain in this way the cases in which the entire substance of the body shines (as in the *Pholas*), or the muscular substance (as is noticed in some of the annelids), or the oscillatory cilia (as in the *Ciliograde Medusæ*), in which irritation or movement heightens the power of gleaming. We should be more disposed, in such cases to think of the electric currents which, according to later investigations, are so frequently found in the organism, especially in the muscular substance, and whose equilibrium is disturbed by movement. But it seems incredible, that, in such an excellent conductor as water, the tension of the electricity should increase to such a degree, as a compensation for the development of light would necessarily presuppose. And hence we may also in these cases conjecture a similar production of light from chymical decomposition, unless we prefer to confess our perfect ignorance in the matter."

Equally small is our knowledge of the use or teleological importance of the phosphorescence. Why do the countless swarms of *Mammariæ* sparkle and glimmer on our coast? It can hardly aid them in finding food; and, instead of protecting them against external foes, should sooner expose them to attack. Surely, however, so grand a phenomenon spread over the entire ocean must fulfil some equally grand object.

As the iridescence chiefly emanates from living beings, it is easily explicable that it is only unfolded in its full glory on clear evenings. In stormy weather, the entire easily-injured gelatinous world of the lower marine creatures disappears into the calm serene depths, and remains there until the peace of the elements again entices them to the surface. Between the tropics, Humboldt saw the sea glisten most brightly on the approach of a storm, or with a heavy vapoury sky covered with clouds.

In the German Ocean, the phenomenon is most frequently visible on fine calm autumn evenings; but it is seen at every

season, even in the extremest cold. In addition, the sea, when under apparently similar external influences, will glisten powerfully one night, and the next not at all. Months often pass, nay, entire years, and it does not display itself in all its beauty. Does this proceed from the peculiar circumstances of the weather, or was there a great mortality among the *Mammariæ*, or do they like to visit various parts of the coast in turn?

It is remarkable that the ancients mention the phosphorescence of the sea so slightly, that the *Periplus* of Hanno probably contains the only passage in which we find the phenomenon shortly described. To the southward of Cerne, the Carthaginian navigator saw the sea burning, as it were, with streams of fire. Pliny, in whom the miracle of the *Pholadactylus* excites such lively admiration, and who was certainly well acquainted with the phosphorescence of the sea, as the passage proves, in which he mentions the glistening fish "*Lucerna*" in a few dry words, has no exclamation of amazement at the glorious natural phenomenon. Even Homer, who accompanies the gloriously-patient Odysseus on so many voyages through the nocturnal waves, nowhere describes them as sparkling and gleaming.

In later poets only scanty references are to be found. Even Camoëns, whom Humboldt christens the "poet of the sea," for his excellent oceanic descriptions, forgets to sing the phosphorescence of the sea in his *Lusiad*. Byron alludes to it in *The Corsair*—

"Flash'd the dipt oars, and, sparkling with the stroke,  
Around the waves phosphoric brightness broke."

In Coleridge's wondrous ballad, *The Ancient Mariner*, we find the phosphorescence of the sea described with greater enthusiasm:—

"Beyond the shadow of the ship,  
I watch'd the water-snakes;  
They moved in tracks of shining white,  
And, when they reared, the elfish light  
Fell off in hoary flakes.

"Within the shadow of the ship,  
I watch'd their rich attire;  
Blue, glossy green, and velvet black,  
They coil'd and swam; and every track  
Was a flash of golden fire."



## EXPERIENCES OF A REAL DETECTIVE.

By INSPECTOR F.

## No. 8.—MRS. WALDEGRAVE'S WILL.

I GOT into a sad scrape between one and two o'clock in the morning of the morrow of Queen Victoria's coronation day—a scrape which had curious consequences. Many of us that have reached years of discretion—a not quite accurately-determined age, by-the-bye—will remember that what with the illuminations and the general saturnalia, the time of slumber was as bright and busy as the day. I myself, after midnight, perhaps before, was excessively busy, but nothing like as bright, as I flatter myself I, in the ordinary state, am, or at least then was; for I must not forget that the chilling, if not absolutely quenching snows of twenty-four winters have since passed over my head. The day was very hot, which circumstance seemed to create a sort of sympathetic affinity between loyalty and malt liquor; and I must confess to having drunk Her Majesty's health oftener than was quite consistent with the functions of a sworn guardian of the Queen's peace. Still I was perfectly myself whilst on duty; but when relieved therefrom,—not till late in the evening,—for the pressure upon the services of the force was tremendous,—I must certainly have gone a *little* too far, or I should not have been such an ass, being in plain clothes, and not obliged to interfere, as to have rudely meddled with five or six swells, who burst roystering out of the Blue Posts hotel, in the Haymarket, singing, shouting, vociferating, in the most obstreperously loyal spirit. I *did* interfere, and the result was, that in a space of time which my after-recollection could not measure, I found myself in the gutter, and that after being picked up, borne into the said tavern or hotel, washed, and renovated internally with soda-water and brandy, I became clearly conscious of two dreadful black eyes, and a miserably painful sprained ankle. The swells were nowhere—nowhere in sight, I mean: but, like all genuine swells, real nobs, they had left five sovereigns with Mr. Banks, who knew me, “as a plaster for the Peeler.”

“Black eyes” was a few days' matter, but the sprained ankle proved a very obstinate, painful affair. The suffering in-

jured my general health, and as it was held at head-quarters that I had received the hurt whilst acting in discharge of my duty, I was granted leave of absence for three months, salary to go on as usual. There is a sick fund in the Force, to which from the first I had been a subscriber, and much surprise was expressed that I did not throw myself upon the Fund. Well, I could not do so. The 19th clause stipulates that no officer can receive assistance from that particular fund, except for sickness occasioned by hurts received whilst on actual duty. There are other funds that have no such limitation. I could *not* make the necessary declaration. I was not on duty: in fact, I was, if not exactly tipsy, unusually excited; and much as two or three of our fellows, who knew all about it, laughed at me, I think I did right.

It was a long time—that is to say, two or three weeks—before I could decide where to have my three months' holiday, salary going on as usual. At last I decided upon Jersey, the metropolis of the Channel Islands. I was captivated by the seemingly fabulous, untaxed cheapness of the place. I am a lover of the weed, and it tickled me amazingly to hear from the skipper of a Jersey brig, from which early potatoes were discharging in the docks, that in Jersey taverns—nay, hotels—you have capital brandy-and-water for twopence a glass, and the best tobacco, *ad libitum*, for nothing!

Quite true, absolute fact, I found. A very desirable place of abode is Jersey—untaxed, unturnpiked Jersey, for ladies and gentlemen of limited income—as hundreds of English half-pay officers, who have sought refuge there, can testify. The island itself is very beautiful, and I do not think I ever more fully enjoyed myself, in a physical sense, than during the six weeks which elapsed between the 8th of July and the 19th of August, 1838—on which 19th day of August I learned, by unpleasant experience, that in one respect, at all events, Jersey may be a very undesirable place of temporary residence for a friendless stranger.

The morning was unusually fine and



refreshing, and after making a capital breakfast at about one-third of the cost of an ordinary one at a London hotel, I strolled out on the pier, and interested myself by watching the commercial activity going on in the harbour of St. Helier's. One of the Southampton steamers came in whilst I was so occupied, and amongst her passengers I recognised Mr. James Repworth, the then reputed respectable bill-broker of Finsbury-pavement, London. I had myself done business, legitimate business, with him on several occasions. He did not at first see me, and he was passing onward from the head of the pier steps, when I accosted him with "Mr. Repworth." He looked sharply about, recognised me at a glance, all colour forsook his face, and he was within an ace of falling over the edge of the pier into the water. "You—you," he stammered, "what—what do you want with me?" The guilty consciousness which unmasks cowards and fools, all except hardened desperadoes in crime, so plainly betrayed itself in the man's manner and speech, that it was upon my tongue to say—"I want to take you back to England, Mr. Repworth." I, however, merely replied, "Nothing just now, sir," and was walking on, when an elderly English lady, in a one-horse car, who was disappointed that friends from England had not arrived, said, addressing me, "Can you tell me, sir, when the *South-Western* steamer is expected?" It chanced that I could tell her. "The *South-Western*, madam, was advertised to leave Southampton at six this morning, in order to make a daylight passage. It is likely, therefore, she will land her passengers by about eight o'clock this evening—before, possibly, as she is a very fast vessel." The lady appearing to be deaf, I spoke with so loud a voice that Mr. Repworth, who had not moved from the spot where I accosted him, necessarily heard every word. His fears, no doubt, gave them a significance as regarded himself not intended by me. He was well known, I afterwards found, to men of position and influence in Jersey, had more than once pursued thither and effected the capture of runaways indebted to him. He was quite familiar, consequently, with the most effective mode of working the altogether atrocious law of debtor and creditor which prevails, or did at the time I am writing of prevail, in the Norman Isles. He was in addition, though I knew it not, a desperate man playing a desperate game, and possessed,

when he had time to measure his position, of the effrontery and daring of the devil himself. How to prevent the possibility of my seeing him go on board the steamer for St. Malo, which would start about noon—and so tread out the chance that I might follow him to France, and cause his detention there till exact intelligence and directions were received from England, (which I could easily have done by charging him with travelling under a false name—that of Charles Warner, he being so designated in a passport he had managed to obtain in London.) All this, I say, must have been present to his own mind; whilst the barest chance that I might already have received some inkling of the tremendous necessity he was under of making himself scarce without delay, commanded him to avoid by any expedient the slightest risk of arrest.

The Jersey law of debtor and creditor was an instrument at hand, well adapted for his purpose. That law or practice may be briefly described, (I am speaking, you remember, of four-and-twenty years ago.) Any one, by making out his little bill, from ten shillings upwards, and taking it to a sheriff, or as he is legally called, *Dénonciateur*—of whom there were two in the Island—can at once, without making any affidavit or going through any formality whatever, arrest any one he pleases, not being a Jersey landed proprietor. He accompanies the *Dénonciateur*, who at once goes in search of the individual whose name figures as debtor on the bill, and if that person be found, and cannot pay the amount with costs, or find a landed proprietor to bail him, forthwith he goes to gaol, where he may remain to the day of judgment—which, by-the-bye, in Jersey, never comes—unless he pays the debt or settles with his creditor, there being practically no relief for insolvent debtors, if they do not happen to be landed proprietors; in which case, I understood the egress from prison was a simple process enough, as easy as lying.

I was in blissful ignorance of all this, and had I been an adept in that particular mystery of iniquity it would not have entered my head to imagine that I could ever have the remotest concern therewith. As I sat in the coffee-room of the Royal Hotel, munching a sandwich, imbibing a moderate quantity of ale, and meditating very unsatisfactorily upon Mr. James Repworth, of Finsbury-pavement, London, my enlightenment was sudden, complete.

In marched the said James Repworth,



in company with a tall, grey-haired, stoutish gentleman.

"Your name is F——," said Mr. Hugh Godfray, *Dénonciateur*.

"My name is F——. Well, sir?"

"Can you pay this account?" was the brusque, business-like rejoinder; the *Dénonciateur* at the same time handing me the following document.

"Mr. F——,

"To James Repworth, Dr.

"To balance of sundry  
moneys lent to him at in-  
terest . . . . . £272 10 0

"British currency . £272 10 0"

"What tomfoolery is this?" I exclaimed, after a glance at the account. "Why, I don't owe James Repworth a shilling."

"I told you how it would be," said that case-hardened scoundrel, speaking with a smile to the sheriff.

"Yes," said Mr. Hugh Godfray. "But it is almost always so. You were luckily just in time. Can you pay this debt?" he added, with stern brevity.

"Debt be ——" (I was very savage, which was some excuse). "Debt be ——, I do not owe the man a penny, I tell you. What proof has he that I do?"

"The proof will be discussed by the Royal Court. Again I ask, will you pay the money?"

"No—certainly not."

"Can you procure bail?" (*caution*, Mr. Hugh Godfray called it, using the legal French word). "Can you procure bail? For so heavy an amount I shall require two landed proprietors of Jersey."

"Of course I cannot, and if I could, would not."

"Very well, then you must go to gaol."

"Bosh! What devil's game is this you are trying on, Mr. Repworth? Do you think to frighten *me*? I am a London police officer, Mr. Godfray," I added, addressing that quite amused gentleman.

"So I was told. But London police officers borrow money sometimes, I suppose, which they are either unable or unwilling to repay. Come, Mr. F——," he added, "I cannot wait here."

"I shall neither pay the money nor go to gaol," said I, doggedly seating myself under, as it were, the shadow of Britannia's shield. "I'm an Englishman, and ——"

"*Chut, chut,*" interrupted that irreverent *Dénonciateur*. "Englishman, Frenchman, or German, to gaol you go, so don't be foolish:" and he beckoned to a number of respectable-looking men in the room. Islanders all, I may presume, and naturally disposed to back legitimate native authority.

The end was that I found myself being borne away—wafted as I may say, out of the hotel by two athletic individuals, who, each with an arm within mine, aided by any amount required of pushings, shovings from behind, propelled me gaol-ward at the rate of at least four miles an hour.

I was consequently there in less than ten minutes, formally consigned to the custody of Mr. Sullivan, the governor of the prison—a pensioned British veteran, and very civil man—conducted to my room, and left to my reflections.

Wasn't I wild? Didn't I grind my teeth? Couldn't I have almost torn my flesh with rage? Was there ever such a devilish trick played a man before, and what was the meaning of it? That was the query—the question! Why should James Repworth cage *me*? Well, I should find that out some day, no doubt, meanwhile I would write to the Lieutenant-Governor of the Island, Major-General Campbell, demanding immediate release. Of course it would not be for a moment tolerated that an Englishman, with Magna Charta, Habeas Corpus, and the Bill of Rights at his back, could be kidnapped in that sort of way! Certainly not! So I wrote to the Lieutenant-Governor. The answer opened my eyes wider than usual. It was from the Lieutenant-Governor's Secretary, who was directed by Major-General Campbell "to express his regret, if any wrong had been done, but that his Excellency could not interfere with the course of civil justice." Good lord, justice!! That rotten twig snapped, the only course left was to write to my friends and official superiors in England, asking for advice and assistance, and meantime to bite the bridle with as little damage to my own teeth as possible.

The gaol was pretty full, and the prisoners, with one exception, all English. In fact, the debtors' prison was facetiously called *L'Hôtel d'Angleterre* by the natives. The exception was, I remember, a Jersey married woman, who having by some legal dodge peculiar to the Island been separated, as to property, from her husband, was herself personally liable for debts contracted in the business which both



really carried on. This was how I understood the matter; but, perhaps, there may be some mistake.

Amongst the English prisoners was a Mr. Richard Waldegrave, a young man, clearly not more than five-and-twenty. That which first attracted my attention to and sympathy for him was that he, like myself, was caged at the suit of that villain Repworth. Wrongfully, no doubt; he was a grossly-injured innocent, like myself, and we would club our wits to devise revenge upon the scoundrel. I ventured to express myself in that sense, and met with an unexpected rebuff.

"You are quite mistaken, sir," said Mr. Richard Waldegrave. "The debt for which Repworth arrested me is a just one. I came here, like a fool, to evade payment, or rather to avoid prison—payment being quite out of the question. In England I should have been liberated by the Insolvent Court in a month. Here I may remain till doomsday—even if, as you suspect, Repworth is at this moment an absconded bankrupt. During two or three months' unmolested fling which I had here, I contracted debts with a dozen tradespeople which I can never discharge, and all have lodged detainers against me. I am, please to understand, a very worthless, reckless scamp."

He passed on, leaving me not a little astonished. Well, he *had* the look of a devil-may-care scamp. The originally fine dark face, brilliant eyes, sinewy figure, bore, rigidly scanned, plain evidence of reckless, socially-defiant life. He had certainly interested me, for the reasons already mentioned; but I should at once cast him from my thoughts.

I thought to do so, but circumstances proved stronger than my purpose. The very next day, going down the stairs or steps into the yard, I met a young Englishman, one Mr. Challis, with whom I had a slight acquaintance. I used to meet him of an evening sometimes at a public-house in Grosvenor-mews, Grosvenor-square. He was inquiring, I found, for Mr. Richard Waldegrave; and after curtly expressing surprise and regret at seeing *me* in such a place, he passed on with the turnkey.

During the two following days he was in close confab with Waldegrave till the hour at which all strangers were compelled to depart arrived. At all events, if they were not engaged in secret consultation, they were together all day in

Waldegrave's room, with the door bolted from within.

Soon after Challis was gone, on the evening of the second day, Waldegrave came to my room, closed the door behind him, and, uninvited, seated himself.

"You are Mr. F——, I am told, a police-officer of somewhat a new pattern; of the Bow-street runner *genus*, but serving in a better disciplined, more carefully organized corps?"

"Challis is your informant, of course. Well, suppose so."

"I may hereafter have pressing need of the services of such a man. You will, I have no doubt, be speedily released. May I ask where, when I again find myself in England, I may address a note to you?"

"My address," said I, at once writing it down, and handing him the scrap of paper, "is at your service. I thought you had no expectation, no hope of escape from this place?"

"Nay, there is always hope. I may be able to settle with these ravenous creditors of mine. Time will show. Good night, sir."

I was struck with a strongly-marked change of expression in the young man's countenance. The dreary gloominess had vanished; there was brightness, vivacity. Brightness of joy, vivacity of *hopeful* expectation.

It was very desirable that Mr. Waldegrave should, and speedily, settle with his creditors. His money was gone; he had nothing to subsist upon, or would for the future have nothing to subsist upon, but the allowance, about sixpence per diem, which the incarcerating creditor is compelled to allow his debtor. A very pitiable plight for a prisoner in a strange land. He would have, moreover, to sleep upon a straw bed, or bundle, covered by a coarse rug; for the broker, who had furnished his room upon hire, suddenly insisted upon payment. A rough altercation ensued, ending in so serious a fray between Waldegrave and the broker, that the turnkeys were summoned to separate them. The broker insisted upon either his money or his goods, and as money was not forthcoming, Waldegrave at last, persuaded by Mr. Sullivan, sullenly consented to let the man quietly take away his things.

The matter so concluded, the broker sent for his men, he himself being determined not to leave the place till the property, such as it was, had returned to his



own possession. He, however, left the stone corridor, on each side of which were the debtors' rooms, not choosing, as he said, to remain within easily-reached distance of so hot-tempered a customer. I followed him and the governor of the gaol to the yard, and knowing the sad discomfort to Waldegrave which the carrying off of his household stuff would cause, attempted a mild remonstrance with the broker. The hog of a fellow grunted an emphatic refusal, and Mr. Sullivan remarked that it was not likely he would grant favours to a man who had nearly throttled him merely for asking for his own. The broker's men soon came, and their master, handing one a written list, bade them be sure that the blankets, sheets, &c., &c., belonging to the press-bedstead were all right. Two or three minutes afterwards he suddenly said, addressing Mr. Sullivan, with whom he had continued to gossip:

"I think I'll go and see all right myself, eh? There will be four of us; and the fellow, however he may show his teeth, won't be able to bite."

Mr. Sullivan nodded approval, and away sped the broker up the stone steps. He was a clever fellow, that broker, whose name, if I remembered it, I should not give; a man who knew how many sovereigns made fifty, at the very least, and who, being familiar with the mediæval sinuosities of channel-island law, could calculate, with sufficient precision, whether or not that number, a greater being unobtainable, could compensate him for threading the, by no means very dangerous labyrinth to a native landed proprietor, congenitally, one may say, familiar therewith. Amazing power of face, too, had that broker, though the face was undoubtedly plain, pock-marked; perhaps those accidents were helps. I am inclined to think so.

But I must not maunder in this way on the road, or I shall never turn into the main track of the story of Mrs. Waldegrave's Will. In about a quarter of an hour down came poor Waldegrave's household goods. A beggarly inventory!

"Any tantrums?" asked the governor of the prison, who was still airing himself in the green-swarded yard.

"No," replied the broker; "no! we were too many for him. But he is desperate savage—growling like a bear. I say," he added (an uncommon clever fellow, I repeat, was that broker)—"I say, you there with the press-bedstead,

stop a minute. Put it down. *Are* you sure that the counterpane is there?"

"Quite sure."

"Never mind, I'll just look;" and that admirable man, speaking professionally, positively unbuttoned the door, flung wide one of the flaps, and peered in.

"All right; go on."

Mr. Sullivan motioned to the man at the gate, and the men with the rubbishy furniture passed through.

This was at about two in the afternoon. I remained awhile in the yard, and when returning to my own room, knocked at Waldegrave's door. There was no answer. I pushed, and found it was fastened within. He's in a sullen mood still, I concluded, and proceeded to my own den.

At eight o'clock the turnkeys came round, as usual, to bolt every prisoner into his own room. That of Waldegrave was found empty; and it was supposed at first that he was hob-nobbing, card-playing, or what not, with some of the other debtors. Not a bit of it. Mr. Waldegrave was not in the prison; that fact ten minutes' search established beyond doubt. How had he escaped? When—by what means?

The truth flashed upon us all simultaneously. He had been carried away in the press-bedstead! The quarrel and scrimmage with the broker were make-believes to prevent suspicion. To be sure I had found the escaped prisoner's door fastened, but that proved nothing. A confederate—and prisoners for debt are all and always confederates—might easily consent to remain within for an hour or two, certain to be able to slip out unobserved whenever he pleased. The conviction of Waldegrave's escape, and the manner of it, which filled the hearts of the governor and his assistants with rage and dismay, excited in us prisoners obstreperous, unbounded birth. The echoes of our laughter made the thundering old gaol ring again. I, myself, was nearly choked with eachinnating convulsions, so to speak; and, far into the night, the silence was broken by sudden gullaws by one or another of us, whom exuberant merriment forbade to sleep. Nothing, I knew, could be made of or done with the broker and his men. They had no hand in the escape of that fellow Waldegrave. He must have got away over a wall, or up a chimney, or something! How should *they* know? How—indeed?

Very cleverly done—no doubt of it; and the incident scarcely lost its exila-



rative influence upon my mind, till I received replies from England to my letters, which, coupled with a communication I received from D  nonciateur Godfray, set me painfully pondering as to by what press-bedstead, or other contrivance, I should ever manage to escape from that accursed prison.

My letters expressed lots of sympathy, regret, indignation, and the rest of it; but the sum total was that I could only get release by the action of the Royal Court of Jersey. In a Tuesday's copy of the *Times*, forwarded to me, I found the name of James Repworth, scrivener and bill-broker, of Finsbury-pavement, London, figuring in the list of bankrupts. One of my correspondents said no doubt was entertained that he had absconded, though the day named for his surrender was still three weeks distant. It was also rumoured, added my friend, that he had committed forgeries to a very large amount. This, as we all know, proved to be perfectly correct. Mr. James Repworth's rumoured felonies could not, I knew, affect my position; but I thought his being gazetted bankrupt might, and I sent a note to Mr. Hugh Godfray, requesting an early interview. Mr. Godfray came, and I laid the case before him. He replied that Mr. Repworth's being a bankrupt was nothing to the purpose. The documents and decisions of the English bankruptcy courts were not recognised in the island. Besides, the debt claimed of me by Mr. Repworth would pass to the assignees, who might continue the suit on their own account. Finally, Mr. Repworth had lodged six months' sustenance-money with the governor of the prison; and his *procureur*, an advocate of the Royal Court, would oppose, no doubt successfully, my discharge, should I apply to the court before the matter was thoroughly investigated; and that, added the D  nonciateur, is a long ladder to climb. Six months, at least—the period for which the sum necessary for my detention had been lodged—I must, at all events, make up my mind to remain in prison!

Darkness and devils! Six months! I should go distracted before half that time elapsed. And I really think I should! Fortunately, relief came before the expiration of another week. The gate of perdition was flung wide by Satan himself—my release effected by the miscreant that cooped me! I was sitting upon my pallet bed, savagely considering

the situation, and how I might most effectually memorialize the British Lion, which animal, I almost feared, must have fallen into his second whelphood, when the D  nonciateur entered the cell.

"You can leave the prison, Mr. F—, this moment. Your discharge has been lodged at the gate."

"How! what!" cried I, jumping up. "Say that again, if you please."

The Sheriff did so, adding that letters had been received by himself and Mr. Repworth's *procureur*, from my real or alleged creditor, directing my immediate liberation.

"A sealed note for yourself was enclosed," added Mr. Godfray; "here it is."

I give a verbatim copy of that note:—

"Nowhere, August 31st, 1838.

"I have forwarded the necessary orders to release you from the custody of the Jersey jailor. I make no apology, having acted solely upon the principle of self-preservation, and without the slightest malice. Circumstanced as I was, you would have done the same. I have also sent an order to liberate a fellow-prisoner of yours, Mr. Richard Waldegrave—a man for whom I feel a sort of regard; why, it is needless to explain. Locked up, both of you, by the same man, you will naturally have become intimate with each other, and you being a detective police officer, the very man of whom he most stands in need, that intimacy will continue after you leave Jersey. Now, though I do not, for the reason already given, formally apologize for having shut you up in gaol, still I cannot but admit that you have been somewhat rudely dealt with; and I therefore give you a hint that may possibly be of use to you in your profession. Should Mr. Richard Waldegrave ever retain your services to investigate certain family affairs, you will find a Mrs. Rawlings, a laundress, who not so very long ago lived in a by-street leading out of Ball's-pond-road, Kingsland, of use to you. Hoping that, although your temper must have suffered, your health has not,

"I am, yours, &c.,  
"J. R."

I thrust the impudent thief's note into my pocket, packed up my carpet bag, shaved, washed, bade adieu to my fellow-prisoners, hurried off, and in less than two hours afterwards was on board the



*South-Western*, steaming swiftly across St. Aubin's Bay, *en route* for Southampton. I have omitted to mention in its proper place, that a letter for Mr. Waldegrave, bearing an armorial seal, and directed in a female hand, was brought to the prison the morning after that gentleman's escape. It was, of course, taken back by the postman, and no doubt returned to England, stamped with "Left the place."

I had been in London about ten days, when the post brought me a note, signed Richard Waldegrave. I was earnestly requested to name a place, where he could, at my earliest convenience, have a long conference with me upon business.

I named ten o'clock the next day, and the place of meeting.

Mr. Waldegrave looked healthier in body than when I had last seen him, but the gleaming vivacity of his restless glances was quite as intense and unintelligible as then. We had a hearty laugh at the press-bedstead escape, which, of course, had been managed by the broker, acting by direction of Mr. Challis.

"A capital fellow is Challis," said Mr. Waldegrave, "and a sincere friend."

"A relative?"

"Yes; we are second cousins, and have been companions from childhood. You will see him presently, as I, upon receiving your note, appointed to meet him here."

"Is he involved or interested in the business upon which you wish to consult me?"

"Interested, unquestionably; involved in some sort, one may say. Challis has met you, several times, I believe?"

"Yes, and at a place where, judging from his appearance, his evidently superior education, and, I may say, aristocratic manners, he should not have been seen. I occasionally visit the place professionally."

"A betting place, I suppose, frequented by knowing ones in horseflesh—up to, or pretending to be up to, the secrets and mysteries of training stables?"

"Quite right, Mr. Waldegrave."

"I was sure of it. Fred Challis has already lost a fair fortune in the pursuit of that will-of-the-wisp, vast, continuous success on the turf. But heaven knows I should be the last to preach upon other men's follies, though mine are certainly not attributable to lust of gain. The truth is that Challis is a child in cunning. He believes others to be as honest as himself, and so believing, may be as easily

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"Go on, Mr. Waldegrave, I am all attention, and, as is my custom, shall jot down notes for my own guidance as you proceed."

"I am the only nephew," began Mr. Waldegrave, of the wealthy and childless Mrs. Waldegrave, of Beaulieu Abbey, Buckinghamshire: I might if I chose be her acknowledged, proclaimed heir, and actually rolling in riches; yet it was but the other day, as you know, I escaped from a debtor's prison. Again, I am the husband of a young, beautiful, and accomplished lady, although I really have no wife."

"Riddle-me riddle-me-ree. The story opens like an introduction to an elaborate puzzle."

"It is an elaborate puzzle: that is the right phrase. As my name indicates, I am Mrs. Waldegrave's deceased husband's brother's son. That husband, that brother, died when I was in my fourth year; and the childless widow at once took charge of me. I could not have fallen into better, kindlier hands. A more admirable, exemplary woman than Mrs. Waldegrave never, in my belief, drew the breath of life. One prominent characteristic I must emphatically dwell upon. Once she has, to her own conviction, discerned the path of duty—that path, strewn with thorns as it may be, she will pursue, though with bleeding feet, unswervingly. Nothing would turn her aside—not the flaming sword of a destroying angel."

"Which flaming sword would, however, effectually stop her painful promenade," said I, with a smile. "You mean to say that your aunt is a lady of unchangeable determination when she



knows or believes herself to be in the right. Pray, sir, tell the story as simply as may be; I shall remember it better."

"You have hit my meaning exactly," said the young man, not at all offended. "I proceed. For more than two years I was my aunt's sole pet, no other person did she manifest the slightest affection for. At the end of that time, the husband of a much loved only sister, who had expired in giving birth to her first child, Emily, died. The orphan girl was comparatively unprovided for; and of course she was immediately domiciled at Beaulieu Abbey. We grew together, Emily Gaston and I—she in marvellous beauty and attractiveness of every kind; I, in strength, precocious virility of body and mind; I can scarcely remember the time when I did *not* love Emily—love her with passion. I will give you an illustration of what I say. A few weeks after the celebration of my twelfth birthday, young Challis—he is only about a year my senior, though he looks older—was passing his annual month's visit at Beaulieu Abbey. He was a handsome lad, as he is still, spite of late hours, a handsome man. Fred was very attentive to Emily—became her shadow. Why should he not? The most natural thing in the world, though to me gall and wormwood. I was sure also that gay, vivacious Emily liked Fred very much. Again, why not? That mutual liking, nevertheless, roused all the latent devil in my hot boy-nature. I wept with rage when alone; and a hundred times was on the point of leaping at the unconsciously offending youth and tearing him to pieces. It is quite essential you should know all this, Mr. Detective."

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"The capping point of my absurd folly came at last. I could no longer resist the impulse of my absurd rage. There was a game upon the lawn—I forget what game; we were all children—Challis about the oldest; and each lad or youth became entitled in succession, I suppose, to kiss the girl he preferred to kiss. It was Fred's turn before mine, and he, of course, selected Emily. Of course he did! Who would not that had eyes in his head? It was, however, too much for me. I sprang like a wild beast at the poor lad, struck him furious blows in the face, the body, tore his hair, the clothes off his back, before any one could effectually interfere—acted, in short, like the mad booby I really for the time was.

"Fred, the best-natured fellow in the world, as I have said already more than once, readily forgave me, and we were afterwards closer friends than ever. At Oxford that friendship continued unabated, and he gave the bride away when, I being in my twenty-third, Emily in her twenty-first year, we were married. There were no formal settlements, but we well knew that all Mrs. Waldegrave's property, real and personal, was devised by will to me, with remainder to Emily, and any children we might have. A painful incident which occurred about two months previous to the marriage, proved how true and deep was my cousin's friendship for me. I received, not one only, but several anonymous letters in quick succession, containing insinuations against Emily. They referred to certain flirtations alleged to have taken place with a Captain Bowden, quartered with his regiment at High Wycombe, and whom I had heard spoken of as one of the most conceited, pretentious puppies in existence. I was at first indignant that such letters should be addressed to me; next worried, alarmed! Certainly Emily was of a gay disposition, of elastic, joyous temperament—not in the least a prude in the disagreeable sense of the term—but it was impossible to believe that she could have been guilty of even indiscretion. That I firmly believed; still I was made very miserable by those accursed letters; and Frederick Challis, pressing me to confide to him the cause of my evident disquiet, I did so. He pooh-poohed the accusations—insinuations, I should say—anathematized the dastardly calumniators, and finally agreed to quietly sift the matter, so as to ascertain if there was the slightest residuum of truth upon which the calumny was based. He was gone a week; and upon his return assured me that the whole thing was a fabrication. There might certainly have been, perhaps there had been, some slight, but perfectly innocent flirtation with Captain Bowden when Emily was on a visit at Old Hall, near High Wycombe; nothing more than that, if that. I have since had reason to believe that, actuated by what I must call false tenderness for me, and firmly convinced himself that although Emily Gaston had been guilty of gross indiscretion, nothing beyond that could be laid to her charge, he concealed certain facts with which I certainly ought to have been made acquainted."

"Ah! and I suppose, Mr. Waldegrave,



*South-Western*, steaming swiftly across St. Aubin's Bay, *en route* for Southampton. I have omitted to mention in its proper place, that a letter for Mr. Waldegrave, bearing an armorial seal, and directed in a female hand, was brought to the prison the morning after that gentleman's escape. It was, of course, taken back by the postman, and no doubt returned to England, stamped with "Left the place."

I had been in London about ten days, when the post brought me a note, signed Richard Waldegrave. I was earnestly requested to name a place, where he could, at my earliest convenience, have a long conference with me upon business.

I named ten o'clock the next day, and the place of meeting.

Mr. Waldegrave looked healthier in body than when I had last seen him, but the gleaming vivacity of his restless glances was quite as intense and unintelligible as then. We had a hearty laugh at the press-bedstead escape, which, of course, had been managed by the broker, acting by direction of Mr. Challis.

"A capital fellow is Challis," said Mr. Waldegrave, "and a sincere friend."

"A relative?"

"Yes; we are second cousins, and have been companions from childhood. You will see him presently, as I, upon receiving your note, appointed to meet him here."

"Is he involved or interested in the business upon which you wish to consult me?"

"Interested, unquestionably; involved in some sort, one may say. Challis has met you, several times, I believe?"

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"Ah! and I suppose, Mr. Waldegrave,



that those poisoned arrows, seemingly shot at random, I mean the anonymous letters, never wholly ceased to rankle in your bosom?"

"Never, as you say, wholly ceased to rankle. Still my young wife seemed to breathe, to exhale around her such an atmosphere of purity, of peace, and serenity of soul, that to harbour a thought insulting to her seemed almost blasphemy. I felt this for the first six months of wedded life. Then the anonymous letters, evidently from the same party, recommenced. The insinuations this time were bolder, more pronounced. My wife was accused in almost direct terms of carrying on a correspondence with Captain Bowden. There were allusions to circumstances within my own knowledge which seemed to give ghastly colour to the maddening imputation; I determined to again consult my cousin Challis——"

"Mr. Challis," interrupted I, "was again at Beaulieu Abbey when the second batch of anonymous letters was received?"

"He was. You seem to be harbouring some strange crotchet in your head, Mr. Detective, about Mr. Challis."

"Not at all, Mr. Waldegrave. The coincidence of his presence at Beaulieu Abbey each time the anonymous slanders reached you struck me, that is all."

"That, my fine fellow, is all nonsense. Be quite sure of that, as I am. I was saying that I determined to again advise with my cousin, my only too unsuspecting cousin. I broke the matter abruptly to him one morning when we were taking a stroll together. 'Have you happened, Fred,' said I, 'to hear of Captain Bowden being in this neighbourhood?' He started involuntarily, changed colour, looked at me searchingly, and at last said, 'Why do you ask? No absurd, *jealous* whim, I hope?'

"I ask because I wish to know—*will* know, if Bowden is lurking in the neighbourhood," said I, with angry passion; and at last cousin Challis was fain to reluctantly acknowledge that he had twice, thrice, met Captain Bowden riding on horseback in plain clothes, and, it seemed, anxious to avoid observation. As to any concernment of my wife with the fellow's movements, my cousin scouted the notion with contempt. To cut this story short," continued Mr. Waldegrave, speaking with heat and rapidity, "which no doubt wearies you——"

"Not in the least, Mr. Waldegrave.

I listen with even more than professional interest."

"At any rate, to me the subject is a very painful one. It is like tearing open an old, partially healed wound. I must be brief with it. Another letter came to hand the next morning, by which I was curtly informed that my wife had made an assignation with Captain Bowden for that very evening. The place was named, the time stated just about dusk, when it was known that I should be at an agricultural dinner."

"Did it not strike you, Mr. Waldegrave, as rather strange, that a third person, and an enemy, it would appear, to both the guilty parties, should have been made the depository of such a secret?"

"I do not remember whether it did or not. Hear me to the end. Evening came on, dull and moist. A slight drizzle of rain fell for a short time as I watched in ambush near the place of assignation. Shortly before the time appointed, a gentleman in military undress arrived on the spot, and sauntered to and fro, whistling. Captain Bowden, I doubted not, though personally he was unknown to me. The place was sequestered. A person coming from Beaulieu Abbey could for almost, I think the whole distance, conceal himself or herself from any one more than a few yards off. No more convenient spot could have been selected. About ten minutes of torturing suspense limped past, when Captain Bowden exultingly exclaimed, 'There she is! I am here, darling!' he added, instantly hurrying towards the coppice path, at the near end of which, not daring to come into the open, dusk as it was, stood my wife. Great God! Shall I ever forget the horror, the agony of that moment?"

"Your wife, Mr. Waldegrave! Are you sure? Did you distinctly see her face?"

"I could not but be sure it was my wife, though I did not even indistinctly see her face. She was too closely veiled. But that veil, a peculiarly embroidered one, was my wife's, the bonnet hers, the shawl worn, a rich Indian one, of a remarkable pattern, woven in striking colours, for which I had paid a hundred guineas not a fortnight before—was my wife's. I flew after the adulteress and her paramour with the bound, the yell of a tiger. The woman screamed and fled. Bowden turned to bay, confronting me, and barring pursuit of his leman. There



was a fierce struggle; but though a powerful fellow, I should have throttled or otherwise disposed of him, but for a stunning blow on the head, which he dealt with a short stout stick, cudgel rather, which he carried. My senses reeled, and I fell heavily. I must have remained in a state of insensibility more than an hour, for when recalled to consciousness by the sharp evening air, the sky was studded with stars, and the full moon had risen considerably above the horizon. I felt weak and dizzy, but had strength enough to reach the Abbey. You may imagine the terrible scene which ensued. The adulteress, with a shameless effrontery, marvellous in one so young, so nurtured, denied that she had left the Abbey for one moment that evening, and appealed to her personal attendant to confirm what she had said. The girl tried to back up her mistress's assertion, but could not; she trembled with emotion, burst into tears, and left the room. I asked for the shawl, the veil, the bonnet. They could not for a time be found. At last I discovered them, put away in a dark sort of lumber-closet, readily reached from my wife's dressing-room. *The shawl, the bonnet, the veil, were still wet*, and a pair of my wife's boots, found in the same place, were also wet and soiled with mud. What further proof of the unhappy woman's guilt could be required?"

"The case certainly had an ugly look. What is the girl—woman—the ladies-maid's name?"

"Charlotte Rawlings—a well-looking——"

"Rawlings—Rawlings! Let me see. You said Rawlings?"

"I did, and a well-looking wench she was. What of her name?"

"Nothing, nothing. Go on, sir."

"You will hardly believe it, but positively my aunt obstinately, fiercely refused to believe a word to my wife's discredit. Her confidence in Emily's truthfulness and honour was not in the slightest degree shaken. She believed that a wicked plot had been set on foot to ruin her; and without the shadow of a shade of proof against the poor creature, except that she was about my wife's figure and height, and could have dressed herself in her mistress's clothes, Charlotte Rawlings was forthwith turned out of the house, with a stern warning not to apply to Mrs. Waldegrave for a character. Me, the imperious, inflexible lady loaded with what,

could she have condescended to use the appropriate language, would have been execrations of the most furious character. I was reviled as a slanderer, a witless dupe, a jealous idiot, utterly unworthy of my angel wife: the storm of indignant passion ending by a peremptory command instantly to beg that angel-wife's pardon for having dared to insult, outrage her by such infamous, utterly groundless suspicions, or leave Beaulieu Abbey at once and for ever. I am as proud, in a certain sense, as my aunt—as obstinate as she. I refused to purchase wealth by the sacrifice of my honour, and in my turn vowed to be a stranger to Beaulieu Abbey as long as the adulteress was sheltered there. I left the same evening, and have never seen the place since."

"May I ask what part Mr. Challis played upon the occasion?"

"No part at all. He did not make his appearance the whole evening. He called upon me the following morning, and never was a man more cut up, more saddened than he. Fred still persisted in the possibility of my wife's innocence, though at a loss to suggest any theory upon which such an opinion could be based. As to Charlotte Rawlings, the imputation cast upon her was, he felt in honour bound to admit, most completely false. The truth was, he himself had an intrigue with the handsome ladies-maid, who had met him at about the very time when I was watching for Captain Bowden—a circumstance which fully accounted for the poor young woman's agitation when questioned."

"No doubt. Well, Mr. Waldegrave, anything more?"

"Not very much more. My cousin volunteered to be the bearer of a hostile message to Captain Bowden, whose regiment was then stationed at Portsmouth, and departed at once. He was just too late. The transport in which the regiment had embarked for India sailed from Spithead a few hours before he reached Portsmouth. My cousin was compelled to acknowledge that he was informed, whether truly or not, that Captain Bowden, who had been away on leave of absence, had only just saved his distance, and been obliged to hire a private boat to take him off to Spithead. The meeting I interrupted was no doubt to have been a farewell one for a time."

"Have you a memorandum of dates?" I asked.

"Yes, you will find them in these



notes. I am methodical in that regard. Well, I left for London—having first drawn out the whole balance at my bankers, about fifteen hundred pounds—plunged into the most extravagant dissipation—drank—gambled—found myself without a shilling, borrowed money of Repworth, a county-man of mine, and who would not believe at first that the estrangement between my aunt and me would continue. We quarrelled, he threatened proceedings, and I bolted to Jersey—got shamefully into debt there, but that you know all about. This is all, I think, it is necessary to inform you of.”

“The deuce it is. Then what do you want me for?”

“Tut—to be sure. What a scatter-brained ass I am getting to be. First let me tell, or I shall forget it, that I received an intimation from my aunt’s lawyer when I had been only about a week in London, that she had destroyed her former will, and executed a new one, the main provision or principle of which was, that if I by my own proper solicitation, were not reconciled to my wife *before she, the testatrix, died*, I should inherit only enough to save me from actual starvation—one hundred pounds a year, namely. The meaning of that menace was obvious enough, and I returned the letter in a blank envelope. I now come to the sudden appearance of my cousin Challis at the Jersey prison; and what brought him there.”

“That is just what I want to hear, Mr. Waldegrave.”

“I had not even given Fred notice of my intention to run off to Jersey; a sort of morbid desire to hide myself from all the world possessed me. I did not even pass by my own name in the Island. Repworth exploded that particular falsehood, and one of that worthy’s clerks, a day or two after the flight of his employer, chancing to meet Challis, disclosed the name of my prison-house.”

“Chanced to meet with Mr. Challis! All the chief incidents of the narrative seem to have been brought about by chance! Pardon the interruption. Proceed, sir.”

“His purpose in visiting Jersey was, of course, to effect my release. But how to accomplish it? He was himself almost completely cleared out—a hundred pounds being about all he could command then, or would be able to command, till some heavy bets he had made came off favour-

ably. That was a distant and doubtful chance. At last, in his anxiety to effect my immediate liberation, he hit upon the press-bedstead dodge. How cleverly he managed it I need not tell you.”

“Very cleverly, that’s a fact, at any rate. But then he had such a first-class fellow in that broker to work it. I call that man a regular genius.”

“Challis,” continued Mr. Waldegrave, “brought me letters sent to my address in London. One proved to be from the anonymous letter writer.”

“The devil! Excuse me. Mr. Challis and the anonymous letters cropping up together again does startle me.”

“Stuff! The letter was very brief, merely stating that, in a very short time, the writer would be able to furnish me with information that would enable me to convince Mrs. Waldegrave senior of my wife’s guilt. That promise has been kept. By early post yesterday I received a note to the effect that if I would send a trusty agent—a clever detective officer would be the likeliest to succeed—to the Royal Hotel, Leamington, Warwickshire, information might be obtained which carefully, judiciously followed up, would remove all doubt from the most incredulous mind. The agent is to ask for the chambermaid who chiefly attended upon a Mrs. Kirkton, who, with her husband, Captain Kirkton, was staying there a short time since. I immediately wrote to you. Are you willing to undertake the affair?”

“I have no objection to do so. In fact it wouldn’t signify if I had, after receiving as I did by the same post as your note, a written order from headquarters to attend to your affair.”

“I supposed you would. Challis promised to manage that. Ha! here you are, old boy! Your name was the last upon my lips.”

The young men heartily shook hands, Mr. Challis dropped into a seat, and I was enabled to get a good look at that prematurely “old boy;” and the more easily that he seemed to have a decided objection to presenting his full front towards me, even when addressing me, speaking sideways, as it were, and regarding Mr. Waldegrave. He looked very shaky, haggard, and there was a nervous, flitting tremor in his eyes, more familiar to police officers than other men. The losses and anxieties of turf-gambling might, however, quite sufficiently account for those appearances.



The ground was gone over again, and in the end Mr. Challis was of opinion that I should go to Leamington, hear what the chambermaid had to say, judge of the value of any evidence she would be able to give, return and report my opinion thereof.

"Now, James, another thing. You know the iron inflexibility of your aunt in sticking to an opinion she has once formed. I have myself heard her say only a few weeks since that she would not believe anything in disparagement of your wife if one rose from the dead to assert it."

"What then," I asked, "is the practical use of these inquiries?"

"Such a declaration as that of Mrs. Waldegrave, senior," said Mr. Challis, sideways, "must, Mr. F——, be taken with allowance, with reserve. The venerable lady merely meant to proclaim anew her own unalterable conviction of my cousin's wife's immaculate purity. But there are modes of convincing even her. If evidence that will hold water can be procured, a suit for a separation *a mensâ et thoro*, preparatory to petitioning Parliament to pass a divorce-bill, must be preferred. Should the judge decide against my cousin's wife, his aunt could not for very shame hold out any longer against the injured husband—her own nephew too."

I remarked that the course suggested was no doubt a proper, but it would be a very tedious one. A twelvemonth might elapse before the cause was set down for hearing. In the meantime a lady of the elder Mrs. Waldegrave's age might die.

"Die! die!" interrupted Mr. Challis, with a kind of startle, and almost facing me. "Not likely; not in the least likely. She is as tough as pin wire."

"My aunt has always enjoyed capital health," said Mr. Waldegrave.

"Very well, the risk is not mine; and it may be that the course chalked out by Mr. Challis is the best to follow. It is settled, then, that I start for Leamington, and question the chambermaid at the Royal Hotel. I shall, depend upon it, Mr. Waldegrave, endeavour to elicit the truth; but I should be a hundred times better pleased if, by discovering the truth, I could establish your wife's innocence."

"Would you could!—Would to God you could!" burst from the young man with deep, genuine feeling. "Stay one moment," he added, as my hand was upon

the door. "Mr. Challis thinks you had better take this, as with it you will be able the more satisfactorily to question the chambermaid with respect to the lady calling herself Mrs. Kirkton." This was a miniature of a most lovely young woman, his wife's, worn in his bosom, which he detached; and after passionately kissing it, weeping, almost sobbing the while, handed to me.

I decided upon starting for Leamington by the 3.14 train; meanwhile I took, according to my general custom, when in a state of perplexity, a lengthened horizontal. To speak more explicitly, I lay down on a sofa and had a good think; put together, now this way, now that way, the different items, scraps, and hints furnished me, in order to ascertain how they held together, and what, as a whole, they seemed to be like. The result was, that instead of taking a cab for Euston station, I sallied out, hailed an omnibus, and was, after about an hour's ride, put down at the Kingsland-gate, at the end of Ball's-pond-road. The hard-hearted villain who locked me up in the Jersey gaol, had said a Mrs. Rawlings would be of service to me if I were ever called upon to make inquiry about the affairs of the Waldegrave family; and the name of the suspicious ladies-maid at Beaulieu Abbey was Rawlings. I would see Mrs. Rawlings, laundress, before leaving London. There could be no harm in that.

I soon found out that large, lively, good-looking body—a widow, in seemingly very comfortable circumstances for her condition of life. My excuse for entering her domicile was to ascertain her charge for washing and ironing gentlemen's shirts. That simple query was soon answered, and I then bluntly asked if her daughter Charlotte, who once lived as ladies-maid at Beaulieu Abbey, was still unmarried.

What a jump the woman gave; her face, the natural or at least ordinary colour of which was sufficiently high, reddening in a moment to the hue of fire, whilst a whole shower of bright, sharp, pin-points seemed to dart out at me from her clear brown eyes.

"It can't much signify, I suppose," said the vixenish tongue, coming to the rescue—"it can't much signify to an old fellow of fifty, if he's an hour, whether any daughter of mine, if I've got one, is married or not."

"Come, I say, draw it mild. Fifty,



indeed! Thirty you mean. But is Charlotte married?"

"Fifty or thirty, twenty or a hundred, that *can* be no business of yours, I'm sure."

I changed my course of sailing, seeing it was of no manner of use to keep on that tack.

"You had transactions," said I, "with Mr. Repworth of Finsbury-pavement."

The reddened cheeks became pallid as quickly as they had fired up.

"Surely," stammered the woman, "you ain't come from that howdacious villain to inquire about my Charlotte! Why I'm told he'll be hanged if ever he sets foot in this country again. *And*," added Mrs. Rawlings, with emphatic sincerity—"and serve him precious well right, too, the hungry old wretch."

"I am not come from Mr. Repworth of Finsbury-pavement to ask about Charlotte. I should scorn the action. Only as you were so rumbustious with a fellow, I thought I'd just drop a hint that I wasn't quite such a fool as I look."

"Well, well," said the laundress, softening, but still eyeing me with intense suspicion—"well, well, Charlotte is not married yet; and if you'll tell me you name, and where she knew you, I'll write and mention that you have called."

"Can't I write myself?"

"Tain't likely, Mr. What's-your-name; not leastways at first."

"Say Jones called, Mrs. Rawlings. Jones that met her once or twice at Aylesbury."

Mrs. Rawlings promised faithfully to do so, and I took friendly leave. One point was ascertained, the lady's-maid at Beaulieu Abbey, Mr. Challis's leman, if he was to be believed, was the daughter of the Mrs. Rawlings to whom I had been referred as being peculiarly cognizant of the Waldegrave family secrets. Good!

Next to Mr. Repworth's offices in Finsbury-pavement, where I knew clerks were still at work, making up the bankrupt's accounts for the assignees. In reply to my questions, the chief clerk said all he knew about Mrs. Rawlings was that Mr. Repworth, much to his, the clerk's, astonishment, used to discount the laundress's notes of hand, payable at sight, two of which, amounting together to upwards of fifty pounds, were in the hands of the official assignee. "It is not intended to proceed against the poor woman for the amount," added the clerk,

"and an intimation to that effect has been given Mrs. Rawlings."

I had had business with the same official assignee before, and found no difficulty in obtaining possession of them, upon explaining that I wanted the loan of the bills for police purposes, and giving an undertaking to return them within twenty-four hours or pay the nominal value.

"God bless us! you back again!" shrilly exclaimed Mrs. Rawlings, disturbed at her tea. "What now, for gracious sake?"

"Why, look here, Mrs. Rawlings; you are very comfortable here, got a nice, well-feathered nest. That patent mangle, now, must have cost a nice penny, and if it's sold by auction will fetch, I'll be bound, a ten-pound note at the very lowest."

"What do you mean, you impudent fellow, by talking of my selling my goods by auction? Well, you are the coolest, most howdacious——"

"Hold hard! hold hard! Then there's the shaycart and the cob I saw in the yard, to carry the things out. They'll fetch me, under the hammer, twenty pound. Then the goodwill of the business will bring me something."

"Bring you, you villain!" screamed the laundress, springing up, and boiling over. "Get out of my house, or, as I'm a living woman, I'll scald you out!" she added, viciously gripping the handle of the singing tea-kettle.

"Hold hard, mother, I say again. You had better. Well, that will make thirty; then there's the furniture here, and in the parlour, and the bed-rooms; and the tea-spoons and sugar-tongs are silver, I see, so that I shan't be much out if I'm driven to it, and I hope I *shan't* be driven to it, with my fifty pounds!"

"Lord save us! Fifty pounds!" trembled out the now really terrified woman, relaxing her grasp of the kettle. "What fifty pounds?"

"The fifty pounds made up by these two pieces of stamped paper—notes of hand signed by you, I believe. Yes; I fancy this is your name, Mary Rawlings, signed here and here."

Mrs. Rawlings did not faint, but the sight of the fatal papers completely paralysed even *her* tongue, and she stared from them at me, from me to them in hopeless dismay.

"Look here, mother; I have got these confounded things into my own hands, as you see. Now, I don't want to do any-



thing to hurt *you*, certainly not; but I must and will see Charlotte. I've heard of things, and I'm not going to be bowled out even by a gentleman, if he is a gentleman. There's a snug public-house to be let just now; and, in short, the thing must be settled out of hand. I must and will see Charlotte this very night, if there's a train that'll take me to her."

"Oh, that's it," said Mrs. Rawlings, fast recovering, and brightening, and with a sigh of immense relief. "Lord! how you have frightened me. You *shall* see Charlotte as soon as you can reach the place she lives at. And you," added the laundress, with her most coaxy smile, "and you will give me them—those notes of hand—when I give you her direction?"

"No, mother, no; not till after I have actually *seen* Charlotte."

"Well, that will do. Good gracious, Jones, how you did frighten me. You shouldn't have done it. Howsomever, it's all right now, as I hope it'll be all right with you and Charlotte; I do, indeed. Come, sit down, and have a cup of tea. For my part," continued the buxom laundress, "if I was a gal, courted by a man who just to find out where I lived would give fifty pounds for them two cussed bits of paper, I should be sure he was no shammer, and would turn up trumps to the last. But there, Charlotte always had a wonderful way of twisting men folk round her finger. Wonderful!"

"That *is* right, mother; a very little lump, please. And real gentlemen some of them, I've heard."

"Real gentlemen! I should think so. Why, there is one who was worth thousands upon thousands, but who've lost it all by horse-racing, they say, would give his eyes for her. Wouldn't he? We often thought she must have saved a good lot of money, but she's close as wax."

"Who is he?"

"Mustn't tell: Charlotte may, perhaps. And couldn't she say a pretty say about him and other folk, if she liked? Oh, dear!"

"Now, mother, time's on the wing. I must be jogging: Charlotte's direction, that's all that stops the way."

"Take and write it down yourself; here's ink and paper. I ain't very fluent at writing. Stop a bit; I've a word to say. You know, of course, having made Charlotte's acquaintance at Aylesbury, that she terribly offended the proud old

lady at Beaulieu Abbey, who set scandalous stories afloat about her, and wouldn't give the poor dear girl a character. You did hear of that, of course you did. Well, in consequence of that, Charlotte have been obliged to take her aunt's name of Pearson."

"All right. Pearson or Rawlings is all the same to me, so it's the same girl!"

"Of course it is; write down Miss Charlotte Pearson, head chambermaid at the Royal Hotel, Leamington. What's the matter?"

"A kind of twinge of colic, that's all. I'm subject to them. 'Charlotte Pearson, head chambermaid at the Royal Hotel, Leamington.' All right. Good-bye, mother."

"Good-bye, Jones. I say, it takes me a long time to write a letter; I've no occasion to send one, have I?"

"Not the least occasion."

"And, Jones, you'll bring me them devilish bits of paper when you come back? But of course you will; I ain't afraid of that. Do you know, Jones—it's a fact, as I'm a living woman—that that villain Repworth told Charlotte and me, both us being together, that them two notes was burned to ashes long ago."

"You don't say so! What deception, eh?"

"Ain't it? Good-bye. Love to Charlotte."

I was early at the Royal Hotel, Leamington, the next morning, with a note written and directed to Charlotte Pearson, the head chambermaid, which a porter promised to deliver to that damsel, who was not yet up, or at least not down. He announced that a London detective officer, commissioned by Mr. Waldegrave, wished to see her. In a few minutes the porter returned with a message that Miss Pearson would see me in a few minutes. Meantime I was invited into one of the rooms and to take a seat.

A very good-looking young woman, no one could dispute that, and bold as good-looking, that was equally indisputable. Her figure was even elegant. "I am here, Miss Pearson," said I, going to business at once—"I am here to inquire concerning a Mrs. Kirkton. It is insinuated that she was Mrs. Richard Waldegrave, of Beaulieu Abbey, Buckinghamshire."

"I have so heard, and have little doubt of it."



"Indeed!—will you describe the lady to me?"

"Willingly."

The description tallied precisely with the portrait.

"But here," continued the brazen minx, "is her very self. This portrait, Mrs. Kirkton, as she called herself, left upon her toilet table, and has never dared to claim it."

The portrait was the fac-simile of that lent me by Waldegrave; painted evidently by the same hand. I quietly rose, fastened the door, and resumed my seat; the girl colouring and staring with both her eyes—and fine eyes they were, too. "Charlotte Rawlings, I—Now don't scream, or make a fuss. Sit down. I know you to be Charlotte Rawlings, formerly ladies-maid at Beaulieu Abbey, Buckinghamshire, to Mrs. Richard Waldegrave. I know also that you have been engaged for years in a felonious conspiracy against that lady, with Mr. Frederick Challis, a conspiracy carried on by means of personation, anonymous letters, and now by this stolen portrait. And it is my duty to take you at once into custody for that felonious conspiracy. Come, we must be gone."

The young woman's breath came thick and short; her face was white as paper, and her limbs shook as with ague. For all that I could read in her fierce eyes that she was even then mentally debating whether it might or might not be worth her while to show fight.

"Come, Charlotte Rawlings, we will walk first to the police-station here. Your things can be brought to you there."

"Do not be quite so fast, Mr. Police-officer. It will not advantage your employers to drive me to desperation."

"I do not understand you."

"Yes, you do. The felonious conspiracy you speak of cannot be *proved*, I am sure of that. You might prove enough to ruin *me*. In fact, to be taken into custody at all would be fatal to my prospects. I am engaged to be married to a young man whom I have long known, and who will make me an excellent husband. He dotes upon me, and has just come into a small fortune. Yesterday only he signed a lease for one of the best taverns in London, paying down four thousand pounds of his own money, and one thousand which I insisted upon a certain person providing *me* with, if he were compelled to sell every stick he had in the world to raise it. My future

husband arrived here late last night; he will be down presently. "Now are you, acting for Mr. and Mrs. Waldegrave, open to a bargain?"

"I must first ascertain the nature of the bargain."

"That is only right. Now pay attention. I have told you the circumstances that in some degree place me in your power. But there is another side to look at. Old Mrs. Waldegrave is dying—wont—can't live three months."

"Old Mrs. Waldegrave dying! I am sorry to hear of it. Yet as far as concerns you and Mr. Challis, the event will be without importance. Mrs. Richard Waldegrave will inherit the whole of the property; her husband's mind, by your and Challis's conviction, will be purged of jealousy, he will be reconciled to his slandered wife, and all, so far, will be well."

"Ah, Mr. Detective Officer, you are clever, no doubt, but you have only learned half your lesson. By a codicil to her will, executed within the last two months, Frederick Challis, who has insinuated himself into both the ladies' favour and esteem, takes half the property, both of landed estate and personal, should Mr. Richard Waldegrave not be openly reconciled to his wife before the death of the testatrix."

"The devil and his dam! that is ill news, indeed. Are you sure?"

"Inquire of Mrs. Waldegrave's lawyers. Now as to my terms. First, that not one breath against my character shall be *publicly* breathed. Next, that as we, I mean my affianced husband and myself, shall require two thousand pounds to complete our purchase, which money must be paid six months hence, and which I have Challis's undertaking in black upon white to furnish me with—Mr. Waldegrave in that respect shall stand in Challis's shoes. In return, I will hand you such irrefragable proofs of Mrs. Richard Waldegrave's innocence, that there shall not be a doubt to hang suspicion upon; letters in Frederick Challis's own writing, for I have been from the first wary in the matter, and he is simply a sly fool—the only strong passion of his heart being hatred of his cousin Waldegrave. A much feebler, but still, I believe, a real passion he entertains for me, and fears much more than he loves me. Him I utterly scorn and despise. People said I was his trull. He was and is my slave, and should remain so for



fifty years, did old Mrs. Waldegrave live so long."

What a clever, fierce, handsome vixen it was; I pitied her husband, spite of his brilliant business prospects.

"Well, Mr. Detective, what say you? decide at once. Mrs. Waldegrave, senior, cannot, I repeat, live three months; you can easily ascertain if I speak truth or not; if we agree, I will go with you at once to London, confront that poor craven Challis in presence of his cousin, and wring a confession of his turpitude from his own lips, of my guilt, as well as his, if you like, but I was poor, ambitious, vain. Yet for all his fine university learning, I have proved too clever for him; and no great harm will have been done. Waldegrave was always a jealous fool; and the malady, which it may be now hoped will have been washed away for good and all, would have been sure to have broken out for some other equally groundless cause. Of course, if you do not agree to my terms, I shall deny point-blank all I have been saying to you."

There was for and against. Mr. Waldegrave *might*, upon my report of the woman's admissions, dismiss all jealous fancies from his brain; and he might not; his cousin Challis's influence over him was so great. Charlotte Rawlings, too, would prove a formidable opponent. And Mrs. Waldegrave, senior, was dying, could not live, they said, three months, she might not live three days. This last consideration decided me. The bargain was struck, concluded, that is to say as far as I could conclude such a bargain in Mr. Waldegrave's behalf. Charlotte Rawlings was quite satisfied.

It was agreed that we should start for London by the eleven o'clock train, I first telegraphing to Mr. Waldegrave to meet me *with Mr. Challis* upon a most important matter, where I had parted with them the day before, at about half-an-hour after the train would be due in London.

"And now, Miss Rawlings," said I, "there is still one circumstance left dark. I can understand that Challis's object was merely to gain time, to keep alive Waldegrave's jealous rage till the old lady's decease, but what on earth induced him

to go to Jersey and release his cousin Waldegrave?"

"I will tell you why: Mrs. Richard Waldegrave had chanced to see, in a Jersey paper, I believe, that her husband was in prison there; and it having come to her knowledge that Captain Bowden had left for India with his regiment ten days before the assignation, she expressed her intention of writing to her husband, begging him to reconsider his rash, unjust judgment. So anxious was Challis that Waldegrave should not receive that letter, that he should get his cousin where his address would be not known at Beaulieu Abbey, that the man absolutely went upon his knees to me, begging me to forego for a time the thousand pounds he was scraping together for me. Likely! He knew that if that money had not been forthcoming I should have gone to Mrs. Waldegrave and made a clean breast of the whole business. Challis has asked me to marry him a hundred times," added the bold, unblushing hussey, "but I knew better than that. A house built upon sand was not exactly a house of which I was ambitious to be mistress."

Waldegrave and his cousin were anxiously awaiting my arrival when Charlotte Rawlings and I drove up in a cab. The scene which followed was really terrible, in respect of Challis pitiable—a more craven wretch I had never met with. Charlotte Rawlings more than fulfilled her promise.

The very next day Mr. Richard Waldegrave took an early train for Buckinghamshire, having prepared the inmates of Beaulieu Abbey for his return by a letter posted the previous evening. Mrs. Waldegrave, senior, lived more than two years after the reconciliation. Challis, who was utterly ruined, went abroad, to Australia, I believe, furnished forth, no doubt, by his cousin.

Charlotte Rawlings, otherwise Mrs. —, and her husband, appear to be prospering in the world. They have a splendid establishment, but the end for them is not yet. The laundress lives with them, is a sort of second mistress; she and I have always a joke about that "sly wretch Jones," whenever we happen to meet.



## FATHER ROACH.

FATHER ROACH was a good Irish priest,  
 Who stood in his stocking-feet, six feet, at least.  
 I don't mean to say he'd six feet in his stockings;  
 He only had two—so leave off with your mockings—  
 I know that you think I was making a blunder:  
 If Paddy says lightning, you think he means thunder;  
 So I'll say in his boots, Father Roach stood to view  
 A fine comely man, of six feet two.

O, a pattern was he of a true Irish priest,  
 To carve the big goose at the big wedding feast,  
 To peel the big *pratie*, and take the big can,  
 (With a very big picture upon it of "Dan,")  
 To pour out the punch for the bridegroom and bride,  
 Who sat smiling and blushing on either side,  
 While their health went around—and the innocent glee  
 Rang merrily under the old roof-tree.

Father Roach had a very big parish,  
 By the very big name of Knockduntherumdharish,  
 With plenty of bog, and with plenty of mountain:—  
 The miles he'd to travel would trouble you countin'.  
 The duties were heavy to go through them all—  
 Of the wedding and christ'ning, the mass, and sick-call—  
 Up early, down late, was the good parish pastor:—  
 Few ponies than his were obliged to go faster.

He'd a big pair of boots, and a purty big pony,  
 The boots greased with fat—but the baste was but bony;  
 For the pride of the flesh was so far from the pastor,  
 That the baste thought it manners to copy his master:  
 And, in this imitation, the baste, by degrees,  
 Would sometimes attempt to go down on his knees;  
 But in this too-great freedom the Father soon stopp'd him,  
 With a dig of the spurs—or—if need be—he whopp'd him.

And Father Roach had a very big stick,  
 Which could make very thin any crowd he found thick:  
 In a fair he would rush through the heat of the action,  
 And scatter, like chaff to the wind, every faction;  
 If the *leaders* escaped from the strong holy man,  
 He made sure to be down on the *heads* of the clan,  
 And the Blackfoot who courted each foeman's approach,  
 Faith, 'tis hot-foot he'd fly from the stout Father Roach.

Father Roach had a very big mouth,  
 For the brave broad brogue of the beautiful South;  
 In saying the mass, sure his fine voice was famous,  
 It would do your heart good just to hear his "OREMUS,"  
 Which brought down the broad-shouldered boys to their knees,  
 As *aisy* as winter shakes leaves from the trees:—  
 But the rude blast of winter could never approach  
 The power of the sweet voice of good Father Roach.



Father Roach had a very big heart,  
 And "a way of his own"—far surpassing all art;  
 His joke sometimes carried reproof to a clown;  
 He could chide with a smile:—as the thistle sheds down.  
 He was simple, tho' sage—he was gentle, yet strong;  
 When he gave good advice, he ne'er made it too long,  
 But just roll'd it up like a snowball, and pelted  
 It into your ear—where, in softness, it melted.

The good Father's heart, in its unworldly blindness,  
 Overflowed with the milk of human kindness;  
 And he gave it so freely, the wonder was great  
 That it lasted so long—for, come early or late,  
 The unfortunate had it. Now some people deem  
 This milk is so precious, they keep it for cream;  
 But that's a mistake—for it spoils by degrees,  
 And, tho' exquisite milk—it makes very bad cheese.

You'll pause to inquire, and with wonder, perchance,  
 How so many perfections are placed, at a glance  
 In your view, of a poor Irish priest, who was fed  
 On potatoes, perhaps, or, at most, griddle bread;  
 Who ne'er rode in a coach, and whose simple abode  
 Was a homely thatch'd cot, on a wild mountain road;  
 To whom dreams of a mitre never yet occurred;—  
 I will tell you the cause, then,—and just in *one word*.

Father Roach had a MOTHER, who shed  
 Round the innocent days of his infant bed,  
 The influence holy, which early inclin'd  
 In heavenward direction the boy's gentle mind,  
 And stamp'd there the lessons its softness could take,  
 Which, strengthened in manhood, no power could shake:—  
 In vain might the Demon of Darkness approach  
 The mother-made virtue of good Father Roach!

Father Roach had a brother beside;  
 His mother's own darling—his brother's fond pride;  
 Great things were expected from Frank, when the world  
 Should see his broad banner of talent unfurl'd.  
 But Fate cut him short—for the murderer's knife  
 Abridg'd the young days of Frank's innocent life;  
 And the mass for *his* soul was the only approach  
 To comfort now left for the fond Father Roach.

Father Roach had a penitent grim  
 Coming, of late, to confession to him;  
 He was rank in vice—he was steeped in crime.  
 The reverend Father, in all his time,  
 So dark a confession had never known,  
 As that now made to th' Eternal Throne;  
 And when he ask'd was the catalogue o'er,  
 The sinner replied—"I've a thrifle more."

"A thrifle?—what mean you, dark sinner, say?  
 A thrifle?—Oh, think of your dying day!  
 A thrifle *more*?—what more dare meet  
 The terrible eye of the Judgment-seat





"And now under Heaven, my arm shall bring  
Thy felon neck to the hempen string!"

Than all I have heard?—The oath broken,—the theft  
Of a poor maiden's honour—'twas all she had left!  
Say what have you done that worse could be?"  
He whispered, "Your brother was murdered by me."

"O God!" groan'd the Priest, "but the trial is deep,  
My own brother's murder a secret to keep,  
And minister here to the murderer of mine—  
But not *my* will, oh FATHER, but *thine*!"  
'Then the penitent said, "You will not betray?"  
"What I?—thy confessor? Away, away!"  
"Of penance, good Father, what cup shall I drink?"  
"Drink the dregs of thy life—live on, and *think*!"

The hypocrite penitent cunningly found  
'This means of suppressing suspicion around.  
Would the murderer of Frank e'er confess to his brother?  
*He*, surely, was guiltless;—it must be some other.  
And years roll'd on, and the only record  
'Twixt the murderer's hand and the eye of THE LORD,  
Was that brother—by rule of his Church decreed  
To silent knowledge of guilty deed.



Twenty or more of years pass'd away,  
 And locks once raven were growing gray,  
 And some, whom the Father once christen'd, now stood,  
 In the ripen'd bloom of womanhood,  
 And held at the font *their* babies' brow  
 For the holy sign and the sponsor's vow;  
 And grandmothers smil'd by their wedded girls;  
 But the eyes, once diamond—the teeth, once pearls,  
 The casket of beauty no longer grace;  
 Mem'ry, fond mem'ry alone, might trace  
 Through the mist of years a dreamy light  
 Gleaming afar from the gems once bright.

Oh, Time! how varied is thy sway  
 'Twixt beauty's growth and dim decay!  
 By fine degrees beneath thy hand,  
 Does latent loveliness expand;

The coral casket richer grows,  
 With its second pearly dow'r;  
 The brilliant eye still brighter glows,  
 With the maiden's ripening hour:—  
 So gifted are ye of Time, fair girls;  
 But Time, while his gift he deals,  
 From the sunken socket the diamond steals,  
 And takes back to his waves the pearls!

\* \* \* \* \*

It was just at this time that a man, rather sallow,  
 Whose cold eye burn'd dim in his features of tallow,  
 Was seen, at a cross-way, to mark the approach  
 Of the kind-hearted parish priest, good Father Roach.  
 A deep salutation he render'd the Father,  
 Who return'd it but coldly, and seem'd as he'd rather  
 Avoid the same track;—so he struck o'er a hill,  
 But the sallow intruder *would* follow him still.

“Father,” said he, “as I'm going your way,  
 A word on the road to your Reverence I'd say.  
 Of late so entirely I've altered my plan,  
 Indeed, holy sir, I'm a different man;  
 I'm thinking of wedding, and bettering my lot——”  
 The Father replied, “You had better not.”  
 “Indeed, reverend sir, my wild oats are all sown.”  
 “But perhaps,” said the Priest, “they are not yet *grown*:—

“At least they're not *reap'd*,”—and his look became keener;  
 “And ask not a woman to be your gleaner.—  
 You have my advice!” The Priest strode on,  
 And silence ensued, as one by one  
 They pass'd through a deep defile, which wound  
 Through the lonely hills—and the solemn profound  
 Of the silence was broken alone by the cranch  
 Of their hurried tread on some wither'd branch.

The sallow man followed the Priest so fast,  
 That the setting sun their one shadow cast.  
 “Why press,” said the Priest, “so close to me?”  
 The follower answer'd convulsively,



As, gasping and pale, through the hollow he hurried,  
" 'Tis here, close by, poor Frank is buried—"  
" *What Frank?*" said the Priest—" *What Frank!*" cried the other;  
" Why, he whom I slew—your brother—your brother."

" Great God!" cried the Priest—" in thine own good time,  
Thou liftest the veil from the hidden crime.—  
Within the confessional, dastard—the seal  
Was set on my lips, which might never reveal  
What *there* was spoken—but now the sun,  
The daylight hears what thine arm hath done,  
And now, under Heaven, my arm shall bring  
Thy felon neck to the hempen string!"

Pale was the murd'rer, and paler the Priest,  
Oh, Destiny!—rich was indeed thy feast,  
In that awful hour!—The victim stood  
His own accuser;—the Pastor good,  
Freed from the chain of silence, spoke;  
No more the confessional's terrible yoke  
Made him run, neck and neck, with a murderer in peace,  
And the villain's life had run out its lease.

The jail, the trial, conviction came,  
And honour was given to the poor Priest's name,  
Who held, for years, the secret dread,  
Of a murderer living—a brother dead,  
And still, by the rule of his Church compell'd,  
The awful mystery in silence held,  
Till the murderer himself did the secret broach—  
A triumph to justice and Father Roach.

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## LADY AUDLEY'S SECRET.

By the Author of "LADY LISLE," "AURORA FLOYD," &c.

## CHAPTER XXVII.

## BEGINNING AT THE OTHER END.

ROBERT AUDLEY walked slowly through the leafless grove, under the bare and shadowless trees in the grey February atmosphere, thinking as he went of the discovery he had just made.

"I have that in my pocket-book," he pondered, "which forms the connecting link between the woman whose death George Talboys read of in the *Times* newspaper and the woman who rules in my uncle's house. The history of Lucy Graham ends abruptly on the threshold of Mrs. Vincent's school. She entered that establishment in August, 1854. The schoolmistress and her assistant can tell me this, but they cannot tell me whence she came. They cannot give me one clue to the secrets of her life from the day of her birth until the day she entered that house. I can go no further in this backward investigation of my lady's antecedents. What am I to do, then, if I mean to keep my promise to Clara Talboys?"

He walked on for a few paces revolving this question in his mind, with a darker shadow than the shadows of the gathering winter twilight on his face, and a heavy oppression of mingled sorrow and dread weighing down his heart.

"My duty is clear enough," he thought—"not the less clear because it is painful—not the less clear because it leads me step by step, carrying ruin and desolation with me, to the home I love. I must begin at the other end—I must begin at the other end, and discover the history of Helen Talboys from the hour of George's departure until the day of the funeral in the churchyard at Ventnor."

Mr. Audley hailed a passing Hansom, and drove back to his chambers.

He reached Fig-tree-court in time to write a few lines to Miss Talboys, and to post his letter at St. Martin's-le-Grand off before six o'clock.

"It will save me a day," he thought, as he drove to the General Post Office with this brief epistle.

He had written to Clara Talboys to inquire the name of the little seaport

town in which George had met Captain Maldon and his daughter; for in spite of the intimacy between the two young men, Robert Audley knew very few particulars of his friend's brief married life.

From the hour in which George Talboys had read the announcement of his wife's death in the columns of the *Times*, he had avoided all mention of the tender history which had been so cruelly broken, the familiar record which had been so darkly blotted out.

There was so much that was painful in that brief story! There was such bitter self-reproach involved in the recollection of that desertion which must have seemed so cruel to her who waited and watched at home! Robert Audley comprehended this, and he did not wonder at his friend's silence. The sorrowful story had been tacitly avoided by both, and Robert was as ignorant of the unhappy history of this one year in his schoolfellow's life as if they had never lived together in friendly companionship in those snug Temple chambers.

The letter, written to Miss Talboys by her brother George within a month of his marriage, was dated Harrowgate. It was at Harrowgate, therefore, Robert concluded, the young couple spent their honeymoon.

Robert Audley had requested Clara Talboys to telegraph an answer to his question, in order to avoid the loss of a day in the accomplishment of the investigation he had promised to perform.

The telegraphic answer reached Fig-tree-court before twelve o'clock the next day.

The name of the seaport town was Wildernsea, Yorkshire.

Within an hour of the receipt of this message Mr. Audley arrived at the King's-cross station, and took his ticket for Wildernsea by an express train that started at a quarter before two.

The shrieking engine bore him on the dreary northward journey, whirling him over desert wastes of flat meadow-land and bare corn-fields, faintly tinted with fresh sprouting green. This northern road was strange and unfamiliar to the young



barrister, and the wide expanse of the wintry landscape chilled him by its aspect of bare loneliness. The knowledge of the purpose of his journey blighted every object upon which his absent glances fixed themselves for a moment; only to wander wearily away; only to turn inwards upon that far darker picture always presenting itself to his anxious mind.

It was dark when the train reached the Hull terminus, but Mr. Audley's journey was not ended. Amidst a crowd of porters and scattered heaps of that incongruous and heterogeneous luggage with which travellers encumber themselves, he was led, bewildered and half asleep, to another train, which was to convey him along the branch line that swept past Wildernsea, and skirted the border of the German Ocean.

Half an hour after leaving Hull, Robert felt the briny freshness of the sea upon the breeze that blew in at the open window of the carriage, and an hour afterwards the train stopped at a melancholy station, built amid a sandy desert, and inhabited by two or three gloomy officials, one of whom rang a terrific peal upon a harshly clanging bell as the train approached.

Mr. Audley was the only passenger who alighted at the dismal station. The train swept on to gayer scenes before the barrister had time to collect his scattered senses, or to pick up the portmanteau which had been discovered with some difficulty amid a black cavern of luggage only illuminated by one lantern.

"I wonder whether settlers in the back-woods of America feel as solitary and strange as I feel to-night?" he thought, as he stared hopelessly about him in the darkness.

He called to one of the officials, and pointed to his portmanteau.

"Will you carry that to the nearest hotel for me?" he asked—"that is to say, if I can get a good bed there."

The man laughed as he shouldered the portmanteau.

"You could get thirty beds, I daresay, sir, if you wanted 'em," he said. "We aint over busy at Wildernsea at this time o' year. This way, sir."

The porter opened a wooden door in the station wall, and Robert Audley found himself upon a wide bowling-green of smooth grass, which surrounded a huge square building that loomed darkly on him through the winter's night, its black solidity only relieved by two lighted win-

dows, far apart from each other, and glimmering redly like beacons on the darkness.

"This is the Victoria Hotel, sir," said the porter. "You wouldn't believe the crowds of company we have down here in the summer."

In the face of the bare grass-plat, the tenantless wooden alcoves, and the dark windows of the hotel, it was indeed rather difficult to imagine that the place was ever gay with merry people taking pleasure in the bright summer weather; but Robert Audley declared himself willing to believe anything the porter pleased to tell him, and followed his guide meekly to a little door at the side of the big hotel, which led into a comfortable bar, where the humbler classes of summer visitors were accommodated with such refreshments as they pleased to pay for, without running the gauntlet of the prim, white-waistcoated waiters on guard at the principal entrance.

But there were very few attendants retained at the hotel in this bleak February season, and it was the landlord himself who ushered Robert into a dreary wilderness of polished mahogany tables and horsehair-cushioned chairs, which he called the coffee room.

Mr. Audley seated himself close to the wide steel fender, and stretched his cramped legs upon the hearth-rug, while the landlord drove the poker into the vast pile of coal, and sent a ruddy blaze roaring upward through the chimney.

"If you would prefer a private room, sir—" the man began.

"No, thank you," said Robert, indifferently; "this room seems quite private enough just now. If you will order me a mutton chop and a pint of sherry, I shall be obliged."

"Certainly, sir."

"And I shall be still more obliged if you will favour me with a few minutes' conversation before you do so."

"With very great pleasure, sir," the landlord answered, good-naturedly. "We see so very little company at this season of the year, that we are only too glad to oblige those gentlemen who do visit us. Any information which I can afford you respecting the neighbourhood of Wildernsea and its attractions," added the landlord, unconsciously quoting a small handbook of the watering-place which he sold in the bar, "I shall be most happy to——"

"But I don't want to know anything

about the neighbourhood of Wildernsea," interrupted Robert, with a feeble protest against the landlord's volubility. "I want to ask you a few questions about some people who once lived here."

The landlord bowed and smiled, with an air which implied his readiness to recite the biographies of all the inhabitants of the little seaport, if required by Mr. Audley to do so.

"How many years have you lived here?" Robert asked, taking his memorandum-book from his pocket. "Will it annoy you if I make notes of your replies to my questions?"

"Not at all, sir," replied the landlord, with a pompous enjoyment of the air of solemnity and importance which pervaded this business. "Any information which I can afford that is likely to be of ultimate value——"

"Yes, thank you," Robert murmured, interrupting the flow of words. "You have lived here——"

"Six years, sir."

"Since the year fifty-three?"

"Since November in the year fifty-two, sir. I was in business at Hull prior to that time. This house was only completed in the October before I entered it."

"Do you remember a lieutenant in the navy, on half-pay I believe at that time, called Maldon?"

"Captain Maldon, sir?"

"Yes, commonly called Captain Maldon. I see you do remember him."

"Yes, sir. Captain Maldon was one of our best customers. He used to spend his evenings in this very room, though the walls were damp at that time, and we weren't able to paper the place for nearly a twelvemonth afterwards. His daughter married a young officer that came here with his regiment, at Christmas time in fifty-two. They were married here, sir, and they travelled on the Continent for six months, and came back here again. But the gentleman ran away to Australia, and left the lady, a week or two after her baby was born. The business made quite a sensation in Wildernsea, sir, and Mrs.—Mrs.—I forget the name——"

"Mrs. Talboys," suggested Robert.

"To be sure, sir, Mrs. Talboys. Mrs. Talboys was very much pitied by the Wildernsea folks, sir, I was going to say, for she was very pretty, and had such nice winning ways, that she was a favourite with everybody who knew her."

"Can you tell me how long Mr. Maldon

and his daughter remained at Wildernsea after Mr. Talboys left them?" Robert asked.

"Well—no, sir," answered the landlord, after a few moments' deliberation, "I can't say exactly how long it was. I know Mr. Maldon used to sit here in this very parlour, and tell people how badly his daughter had been treated, and how he'd been deceived by a young man he'd put so much confidence in; but I can't say how long it was before he left Wildernsea. But Mrs. Barkamb could tell you, sir," added the landlord, briskly.

"Mrs. Barkamb?"

"Yes, Mrs. Barkamb is the person who owns No. 17, North Cottages, the house in which Mr. Maldon and his daughter lived. She's a nice, civil-spoken, motherly woman, sir, and I'm sure she'll tell you anything you may want to know."

"Thank you, I will call upon Mrs. Barkamb to-morrow. Stay—one more question. Should you recognise Mrs. Talboys if you were to see her?"

"Certainly, sir. As sure as I should recognise one of my own daughters."

Robert Audley wrote Mrs. Barkamb's address in his pocket-book, ate his solitary dinner, drank a couple of glasses of sherry, smoked a cigar, and then retired to the apartment in which a fire had been lighted for his comfort.

He soon fell asleep, worn out with the fatigue of hurrying from place to place during the last two days; but his slumber was not a heavy one, and he heard the disconsolate moaning of the wind upon the sandy wastes, and the long waves rolling in monotonously upon the flat shore. Mingling with these dismal sounds, the melancholy thoughts engendered by his joyless journey repeated themselves in never-varying succession in the chaos of his slumbering brain, and made themselves into visions of things that never had been and never could be upon this earth, but which had some vague relation to real events, remembered by the sleeper.

In those troublesome dreams he saw Audley Court, rooted up from amidst the green pastures and the shady hedgerows of Essex, standing bare and unprotected upon that desolate northern shore, threatened by the rapid rising of a boisterous sea, whose waves seemed gathering upward to descend and crush the house he loved. As the hurrying waves rolled nearer and nearer to the stately mansion, the sleeper saw a pale, starry face looking out of the silvery



foam, and knew that it was my lady, transformed into a mermaid, beckoning his uncle to destruction. Beyond that rising sea great masses of cloud, blacker than the blackest ink, more dense than the darkest night, lowered upon the dreamer's eye; but as he looked at the dismal horizon the storm clouds slowly parted, and from a narrow rent in the darkness a ray of light streamed out upon the hideous waves, which slowly, very slowly, receded, leaving the old mansion safe and firmly rooted on the shore.

Robert awoke with the memory of this dream in his mind, and a sensation of physical relief, as if some heavy weight, which had oppressed him all the night, had been lifted from his breast.

He fell asleep again, and did not awake until the broad winter sunlight shone upon the window-blind, and the shrill voice of the chambermaid at his door announced that it was half-past eight o'clock. At a quarter before ten he had left the Victoria Hotel, and was making his way along the lonely platform in front of a row of shadowless houses that faced the sea.

This row of hard, uncompromising, square-built habitations stretched away to the little harbour, in which two or three merchant vessels and a couple of colliers were anchored. Beyond the harbour there loomed, grey and cold upon the wintry horizon, a dismal barrack, parted from the Wildernsea houses by a narrow creek, spanned by an iron draw-bridge. The scarlet coat of the sentinel who walked backwards and forwards between two cannons, placed at remote angles before the barrack wall, was the only scrap of colour that relieved the neutral-tinted picture of the grey stone houses and the leaden sea.

On one side of the harbour a long stone pier stretched out far away into the cruel loneliness of the sea, as if built for the especial accommodation of some modern Timon, too misanthropical to be satisfied even by the solitude of Wildernsea, and anxious to get still further away from his fellow-creatures.

It was on that pier George Talboys had first met his wife, under the blazing glory of a midsummer sky, and to the music of a braying band. It was there that the young cornet had first yielded to that sweet delusion, that fatal infatuation which had exercised so dark an influence upon his after-life.

Robert looked savagely at the soli-

tary watering-place—the shabby seaport.

"It is such a place as this," he thought, "that works a strong man's ruin. He comes here, heart whole and happy, with no better experience of woman than is to be learnt at a flower-show or in a ball-room; with no more familiar knowledge of the creature than he has of the far-away satellites of the remoter planets; with a vague notion that she is a whirling teetotum in pink or blue gauze, or a graceful automaton for the display of milliners' manufacture. He comes to some place of this kind, and the universe is suddenly narrowed into about half-a-dozen acres; the mighty scheme of creation is crushed into a bandbox. The far-away creatures whom he had seen floating about him, beautiful and indistinct, are brought under his very nose; and before he has time to recover his bewilderment, hey, presto, the witchcraft has begun: the magic circle is drawn around him, the spells are at work, the whole formula of sorcery is in full play, and the victim is as powerless to escape as the marble-legged prince in the Eastern story."

Ruminating in this wise, Robert Audley reached the house to which he had been directed as the residence of Mrs. Barkamb. He was admitted immediately by a prim, elderly servant, who ushered him into a sitting-room as prim and elderly-looking as herself. Mrs. Barkamb, a comfortable matron of about sixty years of age, was sitting in an arm-chair before a bright handful of fire in the shining grate. An elderly terrier, whose black-and-tan coat was thickly sprinkled with grey, reposed in Mrs. Barkamb's lap. Every object in the quiet sitting-room had an elderly aspect; an aspect of simple comfort and precision, which is the evidence of outward repose.

"I should like to live here," Robert thought, "and watch the grey sea slowly rolling over the grey sand under the still grey sky. I should like to live here, and tell the beads upon my rosary, and repent and rest."

He seated himself in the arm-chair opposite Mrs. Barkamb at that lady's invitation, and placed his hat upon the ground. The elderly terrier descended from his mistress's lap to bark at and otherwise take objection to this hat.

"You were wishing, I suppose, sir, to take one—be quiet, Dash—one of the cottages," suggested Mrs. Barkamb, whose mind ran in one narrow groove,

and whose life during the last twenty years had been an unvarying round of house-letting.

Robert Audley explained the purpose of his visit.

"I come to ask one simple question," he said, in conclusion. "I wish to discover the exact date of Mrs. Talboys' departure from Wildernsea. The proprietor of the Victoria Hotel informed me that you were the most likely person to afford me that information."

Mrs. Barkamb deliberated for some moments.

"I can give you the date of Captain Maldon's departure," she said, "for he left No. 17 considerably in my debt, and I have the whole business in black and white; but with regard to Mrs. Talboys——"

Mrs. Barkamb paused for a few moments before resuming.

"You are aware that Mrs. Talboys left rather abruptly?" she asked.

"I was not aware of that fact."

"Indeed! Yes, she left abruptly, poor little woman! She tried to support herself after her husband's desertion by giving music lessons; she was a very brilliant pianist, and succeeded pretty well, I believe. But I suppose her father took her money from her, and spent it in public-houses. However that might be, they had a very serious misunderstanding one night; and the next morning Mrs. Talboys left Wildernsea, leaving her little boy, who was out at nurse in the neighbourhood."

"But you cannot tell me the date of her leaving?"

"I'm afraid not," answered Mrs. Barkamb; "and yet, stay. Captain Maldon wrote to me upon the day his daughter left. He was in very great distress, poor old gentleman, and he always came to me in his troubles. If I could find that letter, it might be dated, you know—mightn't it, now?"

Mr. Audley said that it was only probable the letter was dated.

Mrs. Barkamb retired to a table in the window on which stood an old-fashioned mahogany desk, lined with green baize, and suffering from a plethora of documents, which oozed out of it in every direction. Letters, receipts, bills, inventories, and tax-papers were mingled in hopeless confusion; and amongst these Mrs. Barkamb set to work to search for Captain Maldon's letter.

Mr. Audley waited very patiently,

watching the grey clouds sailing across the grey sky, the grey vessels gliding past upon the grey sea.

After about ten minutes' search, and a great deal of rustling, crackling, folding and unfolding of the papers, Mrs. Barkamb uttered an exclamation of triumph.

"I've got the letter," she said; "and there's a note inside it from Mrs. Talboys."

Robert Audley's pale face flushed a vivid crimson as he stretched out his hand to receive the papers.

"The person who stole Helen Maldon's love-letters from George's trunk in my chambers might have spared themselves the trouble," he thought.

The letter from the old lieutenant was not long, but almost every other word was underscored.

"My generous friend," the writer began—Mr. Maldon had tried the lady's generosity pretty severely during his residence in her house, rarely paying his rent until threatened with the intruding presence of the broker's man—"I am in the depths of despair. My daughter has left me! You may imagine my feelings! We had a few words last night upon the subject of money matters, which subject has always been a disagreeable one between us, and on rising this morning I found that I was deserted! The enclosed from Helen was waiting for me on the parlour table.

"Yours in distraction and despair,  
"HENRY MALDON.

"North Cottages,  
August 16th, 1854."

The note from Mrs. Talboys was still more brief. It began abruptly thus:—

"I am weary of my life here, and wish, if I can, to find a new one. I go out into the world, dis severed from every link which binds me to the hateful past, to seek another home and another fortune. Forgive me if I have been fretful, capricious, changeable. You should forgive me, for you know *why* I have been so. You know the *secret* which is the key to my life.

"HELEN TALBOYS."

These lines were written in a hand that Robert Audley knew only too well.

He sat for a long time pondering silently over the letter written by Helen Talboys.

What was the meaning of those two last sentences—"You should forgive me,



for you know *why* I have been so. You know the *secret* which is the key to my life?"

He wearied his brain in endeavouring to find a clue to the signification of those two sentences. He could remember nothing, nor could he imagine anything that would throw a light upon their meaning. The date of Helen's departure, according to Mr. Maldon's letter, was the 16th of August, 1854. Miss Tonks had declared that Lucy Graham entered the school at Crescent Villas upon the 17th or 18th of August in the same year. Between the departure of Helen Talboys from the Yorkshire watering-place and the arrival of Lucy Graham at the Brompton school, not more than eight-and-forty hours could have elapsed. This made a very small link in the chain of circumstantial evidence, perhaps; but it was a link, nevertheless, and it fitted neatly into its place.

"Did Mr. Maldon hear from his daughter after she had left Wildernsea?" Robert asked.

"Well, I believe he did hear from her," Mrs. Barkamb answered; "but I didn't see much of the old gentleman after that August. I was obliged to sell him up in November, poor fellow, for he owed me fifteen months' rent; and it was only by selling his poor little bits of furniture that I could get him out of my place. We parted very good friends, in spite of my sending in the brokers; and the old gentleman went to London with the child, who was scarcely a twelvemonth old."

Mrs. Barkamb had nothing more to tell, and Robert had no further questions to ask. He requested permission to retain the two letters written by the lieutenant and his daughter, and left the house with them in his pocket-book.

He walked straight back to the hotel, where he called for a time-table. An express for London left Wildernsea at a quarter-past one. Robert sent his portmanteau to the station, paid his bill, and walked up and down the stone terrace fronting the sea, waiting for the starting of the train.

"I have traced the histories of Lucy Graham and Helen Talboys to a vanishing point," he thought; "my next business is to discover the history of the woman who lies buried in Ventnor churchyard."

## CHAPTER XXVIII.

### HIDDEN IN THE GRAVE.

UPON his return from Wildernsea, Robert Audley found a letter from his cousin, Alicia, awaiting him at his chambers.

"Papa is much better," the young lady wrote, "and is very anxious to have you at the Court. For some inexplicable reason, my stepmother has taken it into her head that your presence is extremely desirable, and worries me with her frivolous questions about your movements. So pray come without delay, and set these people at rest. Your affectionate cousin,  
A. A."

"So my lady is anxious to know my movements," thought Robert Audley, as he sat brooding and smoking by his lonely fireside. "She is anxious; and she questions her stepdaughter in that pretty, childlike manner which has such a bewitching air of innocent frivolity. Poor little creature; poor unhappy little golden-haired sinner; the battle between us seems terribly unfair. Why doesn't she run away while there is still time? I have given her fair warning, I have shown her my cards, and worked openly enough in this business, Heaven knows. Why doesn't she run away?"

He repeated this question again and again as he filled and emptied his meerschau, surrounding himself with the blue vapour from his pipe until he looked like some modern magician seated in his laboratory.

"Why doesn't she run away? I would bring no needless shame upon that house, of all other houses upon this wide earth. I would only do my duty to my missing friend, and to that brave and generous man who has pledged his faith to a worthless woman. Heaven knows I have no wish to punish. Heaven knows I was never born to be the avenger of guilt or the persecutor of the guilty. I only wish to do my duty. I will give her one more warning, a full and fair one, and then——"

His thoughts wandered away to that gloomy prospect in which he saw no gleam of brightness to relieve the dull, black obscurity that encompassed the future, shutting in his pathway on every side, and spreading a dense curtain around and about him, which Hope was powerless to penetrate. He was for ever haunted by the vision of his uncle's anguish, for ever tortured by the thought of that ruin and desolation which, being

brought about by his instrumentality, would seem in a manner his handiwork. But amid all, and through all, Clara Talboys, with an imperious gesture, beckoned him onwards to her brother's unknown grave.

"Shall I go down to Southampton," he thought, "and endeavour to discover the history of the woman who died at Ventnor? Shall I work underground, bribing the paltry assistants in that foul conspiracy, until I find my way to the thrice guilty principal? No! not till I have tried other means of discovering the truth. Shall I go to that miserable old man, and charge him with his share in the shameful trick which I believe to have been played upon my poor friend? No; I will not torture that terror-stricken wretch as I tortured him a few weeks ago. I will go straight to the arch conspirator, and will tear away the beautiful veil under which she hides her wickedness, and will wring from her the secret of my friend's fate, and banish her for ever from the house which her presence has polluted."

He started early the next morning for Essex, and reached Audley before eleven o'clock.

Early as it was, my lady was out. She had driven to Chelmsford upon a shopping expedition with her stepdaughter. She had several calls to make in the neighbourhood of the town, and was not likely to return until dinner-time. Sir Michael's health was very much improved, and he would come downstairs in the afternoon. Would Mr. Audley go to his uncle's room?

No; Robert had no wish to meet that generous kinsman. What could he say to him? How could he smooth the way to the trouble that was to come?—how soften the cruel blow of the great grief that was preparing for that noble and trusting heart?

"If I could forgive her the wrong done to my friend," Robert thought, "I should still abhor her for the misery her guilt must bring upon the man who has believed in her."

He told his uncle's servant that he would stroll into the village, and return before dinner. He walked slowly away from the Court, wandering across the meadows between his uncle's house and the village, purposeless and indifferent, with the great trouble and perplexity of his life stamped upon his face and reflected in his manner.

"I will go into the churchyard," he

thought, "and stare at the tombstones. There is nothing I can do that will make me more gloomy than I am."

He was in those very meadows through which he had hurried from Audley Court to the station upon the September day in which George Talboys had disappeared. He looked at the pathway by which he had gone upon that day, and remembered his unaccustomed hurry, and the vague feeling of terror which had taken possession of him immediately upon losing sight of his friend.

"Why did that unaccountable terror seize upon me?" he thought. "Why was it that I saw some strange mystery in my friend's disappearance? Was it a monition, or a monomania? What if I am wrong after all? What if this chain of evidence which I have constructed link by link, is woven out of my own folly? What if this edifice of horror and suspicion is a mere collection of crotchets—the nervous fancies of a hypochondriacal bachelor? Mr. Harcourt Talboys sees no meaning in the events out of which I have made myself a horrible mystery. I lay the separate links of the chain before him, and he cannot recognise their fitness. He is unable to put them together. Oh, my God, if it should be in myself all this time that the misery lies; if——" he smiled bitterly, and shook his head. "I have the handwriting in my pocket-book which is the evidence of the conspiracy," he thought. "It remains for me to discover the darker half of my lady's secret."

He avoided the village, still keeping to the meadows. The church lay a little way back from the straggling High-street, and a rough wooden gate opened from the churchyard into a broad meadow, that was bordered by a running stream, and sloped down into a grassy valley dotted by groups of cattle.

Robert slowly ascended the narrow hillside pathway leading up to the gate in the churchyard. The quiet dulness of the lonely landscape harmonized with his own gloom. The solitary figure of an old man hobbling towards a stile at the further end of the wide meadow was the only human creature visible upon the area over which the young barrister looked. The smoke slowly ascending from the scattered houses in the long High-street was the only evidence of human life. The slow progress of the hands of the old clock in the church steeple was the only token by which a traveller could perceive that the



sluggish course of rustic life had not come to a full stop in the village of Audley.

Yes, there was one other sign. As Robert opened the gate of the churchyard, and strolled listlessly into the little enclosure, he became aware of the solemn music of an organ, audible through a half-open window in the steeple.

He stopped and listened to the slow harmonies of a dreamy melody that sounded like an extempore composition of an accomplished player.

"Who would have believed that Audley church could boast such an organ?" thought Robert. "When last I was here, the national schoolmaster used to accompany his children by a primitive performance of common chords. I didn't think the old organ had such music in it."

He lingered at the gate, not caring to break the lazy spell woven about him by the monotonous melancholy of the organist's performance. The tones of the instrument, now swelling to their fullest power, now sinking to a low, whispering softness, floated towards him upon the misty winter atmosphere, and had a soothing influence, that seemed to comfort him in his trouble.

He closed the gate softly, and crossed the little patch of gravel before the door of the church. This door had been left ajar—by the organist, perhaps. Robert Audley pushed it open, and walked into the square porch, from which a flight of narrow stone steps wound upwards to the organ-loft and the belfry. Mr. Audley took off his hat, and opened the door between the porch and the body of the church. He stepped softly into the holy edifice, which had a damp, mouldy smell upon week-days. He walked down the narrow aisle to the altar-rails, and from that point of observation took a survey of the church. The little gallery was exactly opposite to him, but the scanty green curtains before the organ were closely drawn, and he could not get a glimpse of the player.

The music still rolled on. The organist had wandered into a melody of Mendelssohn's, a strain whose dreamy sadness went straight to Robert's heart. He loitered in the nooks and corners of the church, examining the dilapidated memorials of the well-nigh forgotten dead, and listening to this music.

"If my poor friend, George Talboys, had died in my arms, and I had buried him in this quiet church, in one of the vaults over which I tread to-day, how

much anguish of mind, vacillation, and torment I might have escaped," thought Robert Audley, as he read the faded inscriptions upon tablets of discoloured marble: "I should have known his fate—I should have known his fate! Ah, how much there would have been in that. It is this miserable uncertainty, this horrible suspicion which has poisoned my very life."

He looked at his watch.

"Half-past one," he muttered. "I shall have to wait four or five dreary hours before my lady comes home from her morning calls. Her morning calls—her pretty visits of ceremony or friendliness. Good heavens! what an actress this woman is. What an arch-trickster—what an all-accomplished deceiver. But she shall play her pretty comedy no longer under my uncle's roof. I have diplomatised long enough. She has refused to accept an indirect warning. To-night I will speak plainly."

The music of the organ ceased, and Robert heard the closing of the instrument.

"I'll have a look at this new organist," he thought, "who can afford to bury his talents at Audley, and play Mendelssohn's finest fugues for a stipend of sixteen pounds a-year." He lingered in the porch, waiting for the organist to descend the awkward little staircase. In the weary trouble of his mind, and with the prospect of getting through the five hours in the best way he could, Mr. Audley was glad to cultivate any diversion of thought, however idle. He therefore freely indulged his curiosity about the new organist.

The first person who appeared upon the steep stone steps was a boy in corduroy trousers and a dark linen smockfrock, who shambled down the stairs with a good deal of unnecessary clatter of his hobnailed shoes, and who was red in the face from the exertion of blowing the bellows of the old organ. Close behind this boy came a young lady, very plainly dressed in a black silk gown and a large grey shawl, who started and turned pale at sight of Mr. Audley.

This young lady was Clara Talboys.

Of all people in the world she was the last whom Robert either expected or wished to see. She had told him that she was going to pay a visit to some friends who lived in Essex; but the county is a wide one, and the village of Audley one of the most obscure and least fre-

quented spots in the whole of its extent. That the sister of his lost friend should be here—here where she could watch his every action, and from those actions deduce the secret workings of his mind, tracing his doubts home to their object—made a complication of his difficulties that he could never have anticipated. It brought him back to that consciousness of his own helplessness, in which he had exclaimed—

“A hand that is stronger than my own is beckoning me onward on the dark road that leads to my lost friend’s unknown grave.”

Clara Talboys was the first to speak.

“You are surprised to see me here, Mr. Audley,” she said.

“Very much surprised.”

“I told you that I was coming to Essex. I left home the day before yesterday. I was leaving home when I received your telegraphic message. The friend with whom I am staying is Mrs. Martyn, the wife of the new rector of Mount Stanning. I came down this morning to see the village and church, and as Mrs. Martyn had to pay a visit to the schools with the curate and his wife, I stopped here and amused myself by trying the old organ. I was not aware till I came here that there was a village called Audley. The place takes its name from your family, I suppose?”

“I believe so,” Robert answered, wondering at the lady’s calmness, in contradistinction to his own embarrassment. “I have a vague recollection of hearing the story of some ancestor who was called Audley of Audley in the reign of Edward the Fourth. The tomb inside the rails near the altar belongs to one of the knights of Audley, but I have never taken the trouble to remember his achievements. Are you going to wait here for your friends, Miss Talboys?”

“Yes; they are to return here for me after they have finished their rounds.”

“And you go back to Mount Stanning with them this afternoon?”

“Yes.”

Robert stood with his hat in his hand looking absently out at the tombstones and the low wall of the churchyard. Clara Talboys watched his pale face, haggard under the deepening shadow that had rested upon it so long.

“You have been ill since I saw you last, Mr. Audley,” she said, in a low voice, that had the same melodious sadness as the notes of the old organ under her touch.

“No, I have not been ill; I have been only harassed, wearied by a hundred doubts and perplexities.”

He was thinking as he spoke to her—“How much does she guess? how much does she suspect?”

He had told the story of George’s disappearance and of his own suspicions, suppressing only the names of those concerned in the mystery; but what if this girl should fathom the slender disguise, and discover for herself that which he had chosen to withhold.

Her grave eyes were fixed upon his face, and he knew that she was trying to read the innermost secrets of his mind.

“What am I in her hands?” he thought.

“What am I in the hands of this woman, who has my lost friend’s face and the manner of Pallas Athenè? She reads my pitiful, vacillating soul, and plucks the thoughts out of my heart with the magic of her solemn brown eyes. How unequal the fight must be between us, and how can I ever hope to conquer against the strength of her beauty and her wisdom?”

Mr. Audley was clearing his throat preparatory to bidding his beautiful companion good morning, and making his escape from the thralldom of her presence into the lonely meadow outside the churchyard, when Clara Talboys arrested him by speaking upon that very subject which he was most anxious to avoid.

“You promised to write to me, Mr. Audley,” she said, “if you made any discovery which carried you nearer to the mystery of my brother’s disappearance. You have not written to me, and I imagine, therefore, that you have discovered nothing.”

Robert Audley was silent for some moments. How could he answer this direct question?

“The chain of circumstantial evidence which unites the mystery of your brother’s fate with the person whom I suspect,” he said, after a pause, “is formed of very slight links. I think that I have added another link to that chain since I saw you in Dorsetshire.”

“And you refuse to tell me what it is that you have discovered.”

“Only until I have discovered more.”

“I thought from your message that you were going to Wildersea.”

“I have been there.”

“Indeed! It was there that you made some discovery, then?”

“It was,” answered Robert. “You must remember, Miss Talboys, that the



sole ground upon which my suspicions rest is the identity of two individuals who have no apparent connexion—the identity of a person who is supposed to be dead with one who is living. The conspiracy of which I believe your brother to have been the victim hinges upon this. If his wife, Helen Talboys, died when the papers recorded her death—if the woman who lies buried in Ventnor churchyard was indeed the woman whose name is inscribed on the headstone of the grave—I have no case, I have no clue to the mystery of your brother's fate. I am about to put this to the test. I believe that I am now in a position to play a bold game, and I believe that I shall soon arrive at the truth."

He spoke in a low voice, and with a solemn emphasis that betrayed the intensity of his feeling. Miss Talboys stretched out her ungloved hand, and laid it in his own. The cold touch of that slender hand sent a shivering thrill through his frame.

"You will not suffer my brother's fate to remain a mystery, Mr. Audley," she said, quietly. "I know that you will do your duty to your friend."

The rector's wife and her two companions entered the churchyard as Clara Talboys said this. Robert Audley pressed the hand that rested in his own, and raised it to his lips.

"I am a lazy, good-for-nothing fellow, Miss Talboys," he said; "but if I could restore your brother George to life and happiness, I should care very little for any sacrifice of my own feeling. I fear that the most I can do is to fathom the secret of his fate, and in doing that I must sacrifice those who are dearer to me than myself."

He put on his hat, and hurried away through the gateway leading into the field as Mrs. Martyn came up to the porch.

"Who is that handsome young man I caught *tête-à-tête* with you, Clara?" she asked, laughing.

"He is a Mr. Audley, a friend of my poor brother's."

"Indeed! He is some relation of Sir Michael Audley, I suppose?"

"Sir Michael Audley!"

"Yes, my dear; the most important personage in the parish of Audley. But we'll call at the Court in a day or two, and you shall see the baronet and his pretty young wife."

"His young wife!" repeated Clara Talboys, looking earnestly at her friend.

"Has Sir Michael Audley lately married, then?"

"Yes. He was a widower for sixteen years, and married a penniless young governess about a year and a half ago. The story is quite romantic, and Lady Audley is considered the belle of the county. But come, my dear Clara, the pony is tired of waiting for us, and we've a long drive before dinner."

Clara Talboys took her seat in the little basket-carriage which was waiting at the principal gate of the churchyard in the care of the boy who had blown the organ-bellows. Mrs. Martyn shook the reins, and the sturdy chestnut cob trotted off in the direction of Mount Stanning.

"Will you tell me more about this Lady Audley, Fanny?" Miss Talboys said, after a long pause. "I want to know all about her. Have you heard her maiden name?"

"Yes; she was a Miss Graham."

"And she is very pretty?"

"Yes, very, very pretty. Rather a childish beauty though, with large clear blue eyes, and pale golden ringlets, that fall in a feathery shower over her throat and shoulders."

Clara Talboys was silent. She did not ask any further questions about my lady.

She was thinking of a passage in that letter which George had written to her during his honeymoon—a passage in which he said:—"My childish little wife is watching me as I write this. Ah! how I wish you could see her, Clara! Her eyes are as blue and as clear as the skies on a bright summer's day, and her hair falls about her face like the pale golden halo you see round the head of a Madonna in an Italian picture."

## CHAPTER XXIX.

### IN THE LIME-WALK.

ROBERT AUDLEY was loitering upon the broad grass-plot in front of the Court as the carriage containing my lady and Alicia drove under the archway, and drew up at the low turret-door. Mr. Audley presented himself in time to hand the ladies out of the vehicle.

My lady looked very pretty in a delicate blue bonnet and the sables which her nephew had bought for her at St. Petersburg. She seemed very well pleased to see Robert, and smiled most bewitchingly as she gave him her exquisitely gloved little hand.

"So you have come back to us, truant?" she said, laughing. "And now that you have returned, we shall keep you prisoner. We won't let him run away again, will we, Alicia?"

Miss Audley gave her head a scornful toss that shook the heavy curls under her cavalier hat.

"I have nothing to do with the movements of so erratic an individual," she said. "Since Robert Audley has taken it into his head to conduct himself like some ghost-haunted hero in a German story, I have given up attempting to understand him."

Mr. Audley looked at his cousin with an expression of serio-comic perplexity. "She's a nice girl," he thought, "but she's a nuisance. I don't know how it is, but she seems more a nuisance than she used to be."

He pulled his mustachios reflectively as he considered this question. His mind wandered away for a few moments from the great trouble of his life to dwell upon this minor perplexity.

"She's a dear girl," he thought; "a generous-hearted, bouncing, noble English lassie, and yet——" He lost himself in a quagmire of doubt and difficulty. There was some hitch in his mind which he could not understand; some change in himself, beyond the change made in him by his anxiety about George Talboys, which mystified and bewildered him.

"And pray where have you been wandering during the last day or two, Mr. Audley?" asked my lady, as she lingered with her stepdaughter upon the threshold of the turret door, waiting until Robert should be pleased to stand aside and allow them to pass. The young man started as she asked this question and looked up at her suddenly. Something in the aspect of her bright young beauty, something in the childish innocence of her expression, seemed to smite him to the heart, and his face grew ghastly pale as he looked at her.

"I have been——in Yorkshire," he said; "at the little watering-place where my poor friend George Talboys lived at the time of his marriage."

The white change in my lady's face was the only sign of her having heard these words. She smiled, a faint, sickly smile, and tried to pass her husband's nephew.

"I must dress for dinner," she said. "I am going to a dinner-party, Mr. Audley; please let me go in."

"I must ask you to spare me half-an-

hour, Lady Audley," Robert answered, in a low voice. "I came down to Essex on purpose to speak to you."

"What about?" asked my lady.

She had recovered herself from any shock which she might have sustained a few moments before, and it was in her usual manner that she asked this question. Her face expressed the mingled bewilderment and curiosity of a puzzled child, rather than the serious surprise of a woman.

"What can you want to talk to me about, Mr. Audley?" she repeated.

"I will tell you when we are alone," Robert said, glancing at his cousin, who stood a little way behind my lady, watching this confidential little dialogue.

"He is in love with my stepmother's wax-doll beauty," thought Alicia, "and it is for her sake he has become such a disconsolate object. He's just the sort of person to fall in love with his aunt."

Miss Audley walked away to the grass-plat, turning her back upon Robert and my lady.

"The absurd creature turned as white as a sheet when he saw her," she thought. "So he can be in love, after all. That slow lump of torpidity he calls his heart can beat, I suppose, once in a quarter of a century; but it seems that nothing but a blue-eyed wax-doll can set it going. I should have given him up long ago if I'd known that his ideal of beauty was to be found in a toyshop."

Poor Alicia crossed the grass-plat and disappeared upon the opposite side of the quadrangle, where there was a Gothic gate that communicated with the stables. I am sorry to say that Sir Michael Audley's daughter went to seek consolation from her dog Cæsar and her chestnut mare Atalanta, whose loose box the young lady was in the habit of visiting every day.

"Will you come into the lime-walk, Lady Audley?" said Robert, as his cousin left the garden. "I wish to talk to you without fear of interruption or observation. I think we could choose no safer place than that. Will you come there with me?"

"If you please," answered my lady. Mr. Audley could see that she was trembling, and that she glanced from side to side as if looking for some outlet by which she might escape him.

"You are shivering, Lady Audley," he said.

"Yes, I am very cold. I would rather



“speak to you some other day, please. Let it be to-morrow, if you will. I have to dress for dinner, and I want to see Sir Michael; I have not seen him since ten o'clock this morning. Please let it be to-morrow.”

There was a painful piteousness in her tone. Heaven knows how painful to Robert's heart. Heaven knows what horrible images arose in his mind as he looked down at that fair young face and thought of the task that lay before him.

“I *must* speak to you, Lady Audley,” he said. “If I am cruel, it is you who have made me cruel. You might have escaped this ordeal. You might have avoided me. I gave you fair warning. But you have chosen to defy me, and it is your own folly which is to blame if I no longer spare you. Come with me. I tell you again I must speak to you.”

There was a cold determination in his tone which silenced my lady's objections. She followed him submissively to the little iron gate which communicated with the long garden behind the house—the garden in which a little rustic wooden bridge led across the quiet fish-pond into the lime-walk.

The early winter twilight was closing in, and the intricate tracery of the leafless branches that overarched the lonely pathway looked black against the cold grey of the evening sky. The lime-walk seemed like some cloister in this uncertain light.

“Why do you bring me to this horrible place to frighten me out of my poor wits?” cried my lady, peevishly. “You ought to know how nervous I am.”

“You are nervous, my lady?”

“Yes, dreadfully nervous. I am worth a fortune to poor Mr. Dawson. He is always sending me camphor, and sal volatile, and red lavender, and all kinds of abominable mixtures, but he can't cure me.”

“Do you remember what Macbeth tells his physician, my lady?” asked Robert, gravely. “Mr. Dawson may be very much more clever than the Scottish leech, but I doubt if even *he* can minister to the mind that is diseased.”

“Who said that my mind was diseased?” exclaimed Lady Audley.

“I say so, my lady,” answered Robert. “You tell me that you are nervous, and that all the medicines your doctor can prescribe are only so much physic that might as well be thrown to the dogs. Let me be the physician to strike to the root of your malady, Lady Audley. Heaven

knows that I wish to be merciful—that I would spare you as far as it is in my power to spare you in doing justice to others—but justice must be done. Shall I tell you why you are nervous in this house, my lady?”

“If you can,” she answered, with a little laugh.

“Because for you this house is haunted.”

“Haunted?”

“Yes, haunted by the ghost of George Talboys.”

Robert Audley heard my lady's quickened breathing, he fancied he could almost hear the loud beating of her heart as she walked by his side, shivering now and then, and with her sable cloak wrapped tightly round her.

“What do you mean?” she cried suddenly, after a pause of some moments. “Why do you torment me about this George Talboys, who happens to have taken it into his head to keep out of your way for a few months? Are you going mad, Mr. Audley, and do you select me as the victim of your monomania? What is George Talboys to me that you should worry me about him?”

“He was a stranger to you, my lady, was he not?”

“Of course!” answered Lady Audley. “What should he be but a stranger?”

“Shall I tell you the story of my friend's disappearance as I read that story, my lady?” asked Robert.

“No,” cried Lady Audley; “I wish to know nothing of your friend. If he is dead, I am sorry for him. If he lives, I have no wish either to see him or to hear of him. Let me go in to see my husband, if you please, Mr. Audley, unless you wish to detain me in this gloomy place until I catch my death of cold.”

“I wish to detain you until you have heard what I have to say, Lady Audley,” answered Robert, resolutely. “I will detain you no longer than is necessary; and when you have heard me, you shall take your own course of action.”

“Very well, then; pray lose no time in saying what you have to say,” replied my lady, carelessly. “I promise you to attend very patiently.”

“When my friend George Talboys returned to England,” Robert began, gravely, “the thought which was uppermost in his mind was the thought of his wife.”

“Whom he had deserted,” said my lady, quickly. “At least,” she added,

more deliberately, "I remember your telling us something to that effect when you first told us your friend's story."

Robert Audley did not notice this observation.

"The thought that was uppermost in his mind was the thought of his wife," he repeated. "His fairest hope in the future was the hope of making her happy, and lavishing upon her the pittance which he had won by the force of his own strong arm in the gold-fields of Australia. I saw him within a few hours of his reaching England, and I was a witness of the joyful pride with which he looked forward to his reunion with his wife. I was also a witness of the blow which struck him to the very heart—which changed him from the man he had been, to a creature as unlike that former self as one human being can be unlike another. The blow which made that cruel change was the announcement of his wife's death in the *Times* newspaper. I now believe that that announcement was a black and bitter lie."

"Indeed!" said my lady; "and what reason could any one have for announcing the death of Mrs. Talboys, if Mrs. Talboys had been alive?"

"The lady herself might have had a reason," Robert answered, quietly.

"What reason?"

"How if she had taken advantage of George's absence to win a richer husband? How if she had married again, and wished to throw my poor friend off the scent by this false announcement?"

Lady Audley shrugged her shoulders.

"Your suppositions are rather ridiculous, Mr. Audley," she said; "it is to be hoped that you have some reasonable grounds for them."

"I have examined a file of each of the newspapers published in Chelmsford and Colchester," continued Robert, without replying to my lady's last observation, "and I find in one of the Colchester papers, dated July the 2nd, 1859, a brief paragraph amongst numerous miscellaneous scraps of information copied from other newspapers, to the effect that a Mr. George Talboys, an English gentleman, had arrived at Sydney from the gold-fields, carrying with him nuggets and gold-dust to the amount of twenty thousand pounds, and that he had realized his property and sailed for Liverpool in the fast-sailing clipper *Argus*. This is a very small fact of course, Lady Audley, but it is enough to prove that any person residing in Essex

in the July of the year fifty-seven, was likely to become aware of George Talboys' return from Australia. Do you follow me?"

"Not very clearly," said my lady. "What have the Essex papers to do with the death of Mrs. Talboys?"

"We will come to that by-and-by, Lady Audley. I say that I believe the announcement in the *Times* to have been a false announcement, and a part of the conspiracy which was carried out by Helen Talboys and Lieutenant Maldon against my poor friend."

"A conspiracy!"

"Yes, a conspiracy concocted by an artful woman, who had speculated upon the chances of her husband's death, and had secured a splendid position at the risk of committing a crime; a bold woman, my lady, who thought to play her comedy out to the end without fear of detection; a wicked woman, who did not care what misery she might inflict upon the honest heart of the man she betrayed; but a foolish woman, who looked at life as a game of chance, in which the best player was likely to hold the winning cards, forgetting that there is a Providence above the pitiful speculators, and that wicked secrets are never permitted to remain long hidden. If this woman of whom I speak had never been guilty of any blacker sin than the publication of that lying announcement in the *Times* newspaper, I should still hold her as the most detestable and despicable of her sex—the most pitiless and calculating of human creatures. That cruel lie was a base and cowardly blow in the dark; it was the treacherous dagger-thrust of an infamous assassin."

"But how do you know that the announcement was a false one?" asked my lady. "You told us that you had been to Ventnor with Mr. Talboys to see his wife's grave. Who was it who died at Ventnor if it was not Mrs. Talboys?"

"Ah, Lady Audley," said Robert, "that is a question which only two or three people can answer, and one or other of those persons shall answer it to me before very long. I tell you, my lady, that I am determined to unravel the mystery of George Talboys' death. Do you think I am to be put off by feminine prevarication—by womanly trickery? No! Link by link I have put together the chain of evidence, which wants but a link here and there to be complete in its terrible strength. Do you think I will



suffer myself to be baffled? Do you think I shall fail to discover those missing links? No, Lady Audley, I shall not fail, for *I know where to look for them!* There is a fair-haired woman at Southampton—a woman called Plowson, who has some share in the secrets of the father of my friend's wife. I have an idea that she can help me to discover the history of the woman who lies buried in Ventnor churchyard, and I will spare no trouble in making that discovery; unless——"

"Unless what?" asked my lady, eagerly.

"Unless the woman I wish to save from degradation and punishment accepts the mercy I offer her, and takes warning while there is still time."

My lady shrugged her graceful shoulders, and flashed bright defiance out of her blue eyes.

"She would be a very foolish woman if she suffered herself to be influenced by any such absurdity," she said. "You are hypochondriacal, Mr. Audley, and you must take camphor, or red lavender, or sal volatile. What can be more ridiculous than this idea which you have taken into your head? You lose your friend George Talboys in rather a mysterious manner—that is to say, that gentleman chooses to leave England without giving you due notice. What of that? You confess that he became an altered man after his wife's death. He grew eccentric and misanthropical; he affected an utter indifference as to what became of him. What more likely, then, that he grew tired of the monotony of civilized life, and ran away to those savage gold-fields to find a distraction for his grief? It is rather a romantic story, but by no means an uncommon one. But you are not satisfied with this simple interpretation of your friend's disappearance, and you build up some absurd theory of a conspiracy which has no existence except in your own overheated brain. Helen Talboys is dead. The *Times* newspaper declares she is dead. Her own father tells you that she is dead. The headstone of the grave in Ventnor churchyard bears record of her death. By what right," cried my lady, her voice rising to that shrill and piercing tone peculiar to her when affected by any intense agitation—"by what right, Mr. Audley, do you come to me and torment me about George Talboys—by what right do you dare to say that his wife is still alive?"

"By the right of circumstantial evidence, Lady Audley," answered Robert—"by the right of that circumstantial evidence which will sometimes fix the guilt of a man's murder upon that person who, on the first hearing of the case, seems of all other men the most unlikely to be guilty."

"What circumstantial evidence?"

"The evidence of time and place. The evidence of handwriting. When Helen Talboys left her father's house at Wildernsea, she left a letter behind her—a letter in which she declared that she was weary of her old life, and that she wished to seek a new home and a new fortune. That letter is in my possession."

"Indeed?"

"Shall I tell you *whose* handwriting resembles that of Helen Talboys so closely, that the most dexterous expert could perceive no distinction between the two?"

"A resemblance between the handwriting of two women is no very uncommon circumstance now-a-days," replied my lady, carelessly. "I could show you the caligraphies of half-a-dozen of my female correspondents, and defy you to discover any great differences in them."

"But what if the handwriting is a very uncommon one, presenting marked peculiarities by which it may be recognised among a hundred?"

"Why, in that case the coincidence is rather curious," answered my lady; "but it is nothing more than a coincidence. You cannot deny the fact of Helen Talboys' death on the ground that her handwriting resembles that of some surviving person."

"But if a series of such coincidences lead up to the same point," said Robert. "Helen Talboys left her father's house, according to the declaration in her own handwriting, because she was weary of her old life, and wished to begin a new one. Do you know what I infer from this?"

My lady shrugged her shoulders.

"I have not the least idea," she said; "and as you have detained me in this gloomy place nearly half-an-hour, I must beg that you will release me, and let me go and dress for dinner."

"No, Lady Audley," answered Robert, with a cold sternness that was so strange to him as to transform him into another creature—a pitiless embodiment of jus-

tice, a cruel instrument of retribution—"no, Lady Audley," he repeated, "I have told you that womanly prevarication will not help you; I tell you now that defiance will not serve you. I have dealt fairly with you, and have given you fair warning. I gave you indirect notice of your danger two months ago."

"What do you mean?" asked my lady, suddenly.

"You did not choose to take that warning, Lady Audley," pursued Robert, "and the time has come in which I must speak very plainly to you. Do you think the gifts which you have played against fortune are to hold you exempt from retribution? No, my lady, your youth and beauty, your grace and refinement, only make the horrible secret of your life more horrible. I tell you that the evidence against you wants only one link to be strong enough for your condemnation, and that link shall be added. Helen Talboys never returned to her father's house. When she deserted that poor old father, she went away from his humble shelter with the declared intention of washing her hands of that old life. What do people generally do when they wish to begin a new existence—to start for a second time in the race of life, free from the encumbrances that had fettered their first journey? *They change their names*, Lady Audley. Helen Talboys deserted her infant son—she went away from Wildernsea with the predetermination of sinking her identity. She disappeared as Helen Talboys upon the 16th of August, 1854, and upon the 17th of that month she reappeared as Lucy Graham, the friendless girl who undertook a profitless duty in consideration of a home in which she was asked no questions."

"You are mad, Mr. Audley!" cried my lady. "You are mad, and my husband shall protect me from your insolence. What if this Helen Talboys ran away from her home upon one day, and I entered my employer's house upon the next, what does that prove?"

"By itself, very little," replied Robert Audley; "but with the help of other evidence——"

"What evidence?"

"The evidence of two labels, pasted one over the other, upon a box left by you in the possession of Mrs. Vincent, the upper label bearing the name of Miss Graham, the lower that of Mrs. George Talboys."

My lady was silent. Robert Audley

could not see her face in the dusk, but he could see that her two small hands were clasped convulsively over her heart, and he knew that the shot had gone home to its mark.

"God help her, poor, wretched creature," he thought. "She knows now that she is lost. I wonder if the judges of the land feel as I do now when they put on the black cap and pass sentence of death upon some poor, shivering wretch who has never done them any wrong. Do they feel a heroic fervour of virtuous indignation, or do they suffer this dull anguish which gnaws my vitals as I talk to this helpless woman?"

He walked by my lady's side, silently, for some minutes. They had been pacing up and down the dim avenue, and they were now drawing near the leafless shrubbery at one end of the lime-walk—the shrubbery in which the ruined well sheltered its unheeded decay among the tangled masses of briery underwood.

A winding pathway, neglected and half-choked with weeds, led towards this well. Robert left the lime-walk, and struck into this pathway. There was more light in the shrubbery than in the avenue, and Mr. Audley wished to see my lady's face.

He did not speak until they reached the patch of rank grass beside the well. The massive brickwork had fallen away here and there, and loose fragments of masonry lay buried amidst weeds and briars. The heavy posts which had supported the wooden roller still remained, but the iron spindle had been dragged from its socket and lay a few paces from the well, rusty, discoloured, and forgotten.

Robert Audley leant against one of the moss-grown posts and looked down at my lady's face, very pale in the chill winter twilight. The moon had newly risen, a feebly luminous crescent in the grey heavens, and a faint, ghostly light mingled with the misty shadows of the declining day. My lady's face seemed like that face which Robert Audley had seen in his dreams looking out of the white foam flakes on the green sea waves and luring his uncle to destruction.

"Those two labels are in my possession, Lady Audley," he resumed. "I took them from the box left by you at Crescent Villas. I took them in the presence of Mrs. Vincent and Miss Tonks. Have you any proof to offer against this evidence? You say to me, 'I am Lucy Graham and I have nothing whatever to do with Helen



Talboys.' In that case, you can produce witnesses who will declare your antecedents. Where had you been living prior to your appearance at Crescent Villas? You must have friends, relations, connexions, who can come forward to prove as much as this for you. If you were the most desolate creature upon this earth, you would be able to point to some one who could identify you with the past."

"Yes," cried my lady, "if I were placed in a criminal dock, I could, no doubt, bring forward witnesses to refute your absurd accusation. But I am not in a criminal dock, Mr. Audley, and I do not choose to do anything but laugh at your ridiculous folly. I tell you that you are mad! If you please to say that Helen Talboys is not dead and that I am Helen Talboys, you may do so. If you choose to go wandering about to the places in which I have lived, and to the places in which this Mrs. Talboys has lived, you must follow the bent of your own inclination, but I would warn you that such fancies have sometimes conducted people, as apparently sane as yourself, to the life-long imprisonment of a private lunatic asylum."

Robert Audley started and recoiled a few paces among the weeds and brushwood as my lady said this.

"She would be capable of any new crime to shield her from the consequences of the old one," he thought. "She would be capable of using her influence with my uncle to place me in a madhouse."

I do not say that Robert Audley was a coward, but I will admit that a shiver of horror, something akin to fear, chilled him to the heart as he remembered the horrible things that have been done by women since that day upon which Eve was created to be Adam's companion and helpmeet in the garden of Eden. What if this woman's hellish power of dissimulation should be stronger than the truth, and crush him. She had not spared George Talboys when he had stood in her way and menaced her with a certain peril; would she spare him who threatened her with a far greater danger? Are women merciful, or loving, or kind in proportion to their beauty and their grace? Was there not a certain Monsieur Mazers de Latude, who had the bad fortune to offend the all-accomplished Madame de Pompadour, who expiated his youthful indiscretion by a life-long imprisonment; who twice escaped from prison, to be twice cast back into captivity; who,

trusting in the tardy generosity of his beautiful foe, betrayed himself to an implacable fiend? Robert Audley looked at the pale face of the woman standing by his side; that fair and beautiful face, illumined by starry blue eyes, that had a strange and surely a dangerous light in them; and remembering a hundred stories of womanly perfidy, shuddered as he thought how unequal the struggle might be between himself and his uncle's wife.

"I have shown her my cards," he thought, "but she has kept hers hidden from me. The mask that she wears is not to be plucked away. My uncle would rather think me mad than believe her guilty."

The pale face of Clara Talboys—that grave and earnest face, so different in its character to my lady's fragile beauty—arose before him.

"What a coward I am to think of myself or my own danger," he thought. "The more I see of this woman the more reason I have to dread her influence upon others; the more reason to wish her far away from this house."

He looked about him in the dusky obscurity. The lonely garden was as quiet as some solitary graveyard, walled in and hidden away from the world of the living.

"It was somewhere in this garden that she met George Talboys upon the day of his disappearance," he thought. "I wonder where it was they met; I wonder where it was that he looked into her cruel face and taxed her with her falsehood."

My lady, with her little hand resting lightly upon the opposite post to that against which Robert leant, toyed with her pretty foot amongst the long weeds, but kept a furtive watch upon her enemy's face.

"It is to be a duel to the death, then, my lady," said Robert Audley, solemnly. "You refuse to accept my warning. You refuse to run away and repent of your wickedness in some foreign place, far from the generous gentleman you have deceived and fooled by your false witcheries. You choose to remain here and defy me."

"I do," answered Lady Audley, lifting her head and looking full at the young barrister. "It is no fault of mine if my husband's nephew goes mad and chooses me for the victim of his monomania."

"So be it, then, my lady," answered Robert. "My friend George Talboys was last seen entering these gardens by the little iron gate at which we came in to-night. He was last heard inquiring

for you. He was seen to enter these gardens, but he was never seen to leave them. I do not believe that he ever did leave them. I believe that he met with his death within the boundary of these grounds; and that his body lies hidden below some quiet water, or in some forgotten corner of this place. I will have such a search made as shall level that house to the earth and root up every tree in these gardens, rather than I will fail in finding the grave of my murdered friend."

Lucy Audley uttered a long, low, wailing cry, and threw up her arms above her head with a wild gesture of despair, but she made no answer to the ghastly charge of her accuser. Her arms slowly dropped, and she stood staring at Robert Audley, her white face gleaming through the dusk, her blue eyes glittering and dilated.

"You shall never live to do this," she said. "*I will kill you first.* Why have you tormented me so? Why could you not let me alone? What harm had I ever done *you* that you should make yourself my persecutor, and dog my steps, and watch my looks, and play the spy upon me? Do you want to drive me mad? Do you know what it is to wrestle with a madwoman? No," cried my lady, with a laugh, "you do not, or you would never——"

She stopped abruptly and drew herself suddenly to her fullest height. It was the same action which Robert had seen in the old half-drunken lieutenant; and it had that same dignity—the sublimity of extreme misery.

"Go away, Mr. Audley," she said. "You are mad, I tell you, you are mad."

"I am going, my lady," answered Robert, quietly. "I would have condoned your crimes out of pity to your wretchedness. You have refused to accept my mercy. I wished to have pity upon the living. I shall henceforth only remember my duty to the dead."

He walked away from the lonely well under the shadow of the limes. My lady followed him slowly down that long, gloomy avenue, and across the rustic bridge to the iron gate. As he passed through the gate, Alicia came out of a little half-glass door that opened from an oak-panelled breakfast-room at one angle of the house, and met her cousin upon the threshold of the gateway.

"I have been looking for you everywhere, Robert," she said. "Papa has come down to the library, and will be glad to see you."

The young man started at the sound of his cousin's fresh young voice. "Good heavens!" he thought, "can these two women be of the same clay? Can this frank, generous-hearted girl, who cannot conceal any impulse of her innocent nature, be of the same flesh and blood as that wretched creature whose shadow falls upon the path beside me?"

He looked from his cousin to Lady Audley, who stood near the gateway, waiting for him to stand aside and let her pass him.

"I don't know what has come to your cousin, my dear Alicia," said my lady. "He is so absent-minded and eccentric, as to be quite beyond my comprehension."

"Indeed," exclaimed Miss Audley; "and yet I should imagine, from the length of your *tête-à-tête*, that you had made some effort to understand him."

"Oh yes," said Robert, quietly, "my lady and I understand each other very well; but as it is growing late I will wish you good evening, ladies. I shall sleep to-night at Mount Stanning, as I have some business to attend to up there, and I will come down and see my uncle to-morrow."

"What, Robert!" cried Alicia, "you surely won't go away without seeing papa?"

"Yes, my dear," answered the young man. "I am a little disturbed by some disagreeable business in which I am very much concerned, and I would rather not see my uncle. Good night, Alicia. I will come or write to-morrow."

He pressed his cousin's hand, bowed to Lady Audley, and walked away under the black shadows of the archway, and out into the quiet avenue beyond the Court.

My lady and Alicia stood watching him until he was out of sight.

"What in goodness name is the matter with my cousin Robert?" exclaimed Miss Audley, impatiently, as the barrister disappeared. "What does he mean by these absurd goings-on? Some disagreeable business that disturbs him, indeed! I suppose the unhappy creature has had a brief forced upon him by some evil-starred attorney, and is sinking into a state of imbecility from a dim consciousness of his own incompetence."

"Have you ever studied your cousin's character, Alicia?" asked my lady, very seriously, after a pause.

"Studied his character! No, Lady Audley. Why should I study his character?" said Alicia. "There is very



little study required to convince anybody that he is a lazy, selfish Sybarite, who cares for nothing in the world except his own ease and comfort."

"But have you never thought him eccentric?"

"Eccentric!" repeated Alicia, pursing up her red lips and shrugging her shoulders. "Well, yes—I believe that is the excuse generally made for such people. I suppose Bob *is* eccentric."

"I have never heard you speak of his father and mother," said my lady, thoughtfully. "Do you remember them?"

"I never saw his mother. She was a Miss Dalrymple, a very dashing girl, who ran away with my uncle, and lost a very handsome fortune in consequence. She died at Nice when poor Bob was five years old."

"Did you ever hear anything particular about her?"

"How do you mean, 'particular'?" asked Alicia.

"Did you ever hear that she was eccentric—what people call 'odd'?"

"Oh, no," said Alicia, laughing. "My aunt was a very reasonable woman, I believe, though she did marry for love. But you must remember that she died before I was born, and I have not, therefore, felt very much curiosity about her."

"But you recollect your uncle, I suppose?"

"My uncle Robert?" said Alicia. "Oh, yes, I remember him very well indeed."

"Was *he* eccentric—I mean to say, peculiar in his habits, like your cousin?"

"Yes, I believe Robert inherits all his absurdities from his father. My uncle expressed the same indifference for his

fellow-creatures as my cousin, but as he was a good husband, an affectionate father, and a kind master, nobody ever challenged his opinions."

"But he *was* eccentric?"

"Yes; I suppose he was generally thought a little eccentric."

"Ah," said my lady, gravely, "I thought as much. Do you know, Alicia, that madness is more often transmitted from father to son than from father to daughter, and from mother to daughter than from mother to son? Your cousin Robert Audley is a very handsome young man, and I believe a very good-hearted young man, but he must be watched, Alicia, for he is *mad*!"

"Mad!" cried Miss Audley, indignantly; "you are dreaming, my lady, or—or—you are trying to frighten me," added the young lady, with considerable alarm.

"I only wish to put you on your guard, Alicia," answered my lady. "Mr. Audley may be as you say, merely eccentric; but he has talked to me this evening in a manner that has filled me with absolute terror, and I believe that he is going mad. I shall speak very seriously to Sir Michael this very night."

"Speak to papa!" exclaimed Alicia; "you surely won't distress papa by suggesting such a possibility!"

"I shall only put him on his guard, my dear Alicia."

"But he'll never believe you," said Miss Audley; "he will laugh at such an idea."

"No, Alicia; he will believe anything that I tell him," answered my lady, with a quiet smile.

(To be continued.)

